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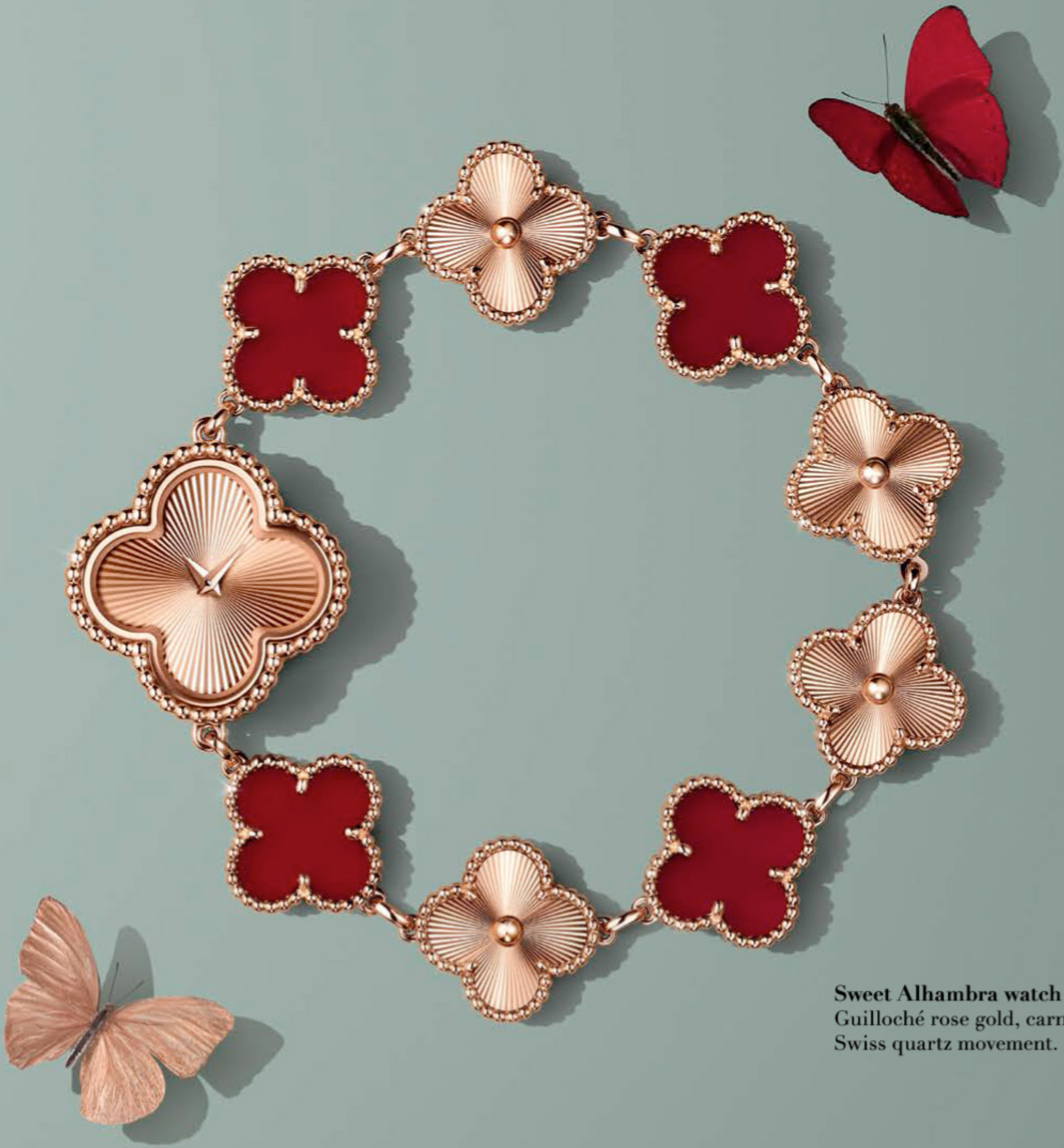

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AROUND ASIA

In case you missed them, here are some of our favourite stories from last month's editions, available now online

TATLER HONG KONG

Hong Kong- and Milan-based interior architect and furniture designer Sean Dix took *Tatler* on a tour of his sun-drenched loft apartment, sharing his eclectic collection of mid-century furniture and curiosities.

TATLER INDONESIA

Pop phenom Raisa Andriana and actor Nicholas Saputra appear on the May cover, having worked on the music video for Raisa's song *Nyaman Tak Cukup*. The pair spoke about their mutual respect, and their work beyond their respective day jobs.

TATLER MALAYSIA

Meet the six winners of the Front & Female Awards Malaysia 2023, including Xin Yu Lim, who co-founded The Asli Co, an accredited social enterprise that gives orang asli mothers the tools, resources and training to produce high-quality, handmade artisanal gifts and receive an income they wouldn't otherwise.

TATLER PHILIPPINES

Eighteen-year-old racing star Bianca Bustamente put on the brakes long enough to chat to *Tatler* about overcoming imposter syndrome as a rare woman in the sport and inspiring other girls to get behind the steering wheel.

SHANGLIU TATLER

Della Tang, a 2022 Gen.T honouree, won the first ever Beronia Asia's Best Sommelier Award 2023, her first international prize. The 29-year-old told *Tatler* how she reacted when she learnt she had won, and what convinced her to take her current job at Shenzhen restaurant Ensue.

TATLER SINGAPORE

Fashion designer Andrew Gn may have made his name in Paris, but his heart is always in Singapore. The city's Asian Civilisations Museum is hosting the designer's first major retrospective. *Tatler* caught up with him ahead of the opening.

TATLER TAIWAN

Bernice Pan, who is behind London-based sustainable fashion brand Deploy, and her father JJ Pan, the founder of Taiwan-based JJP Architects and Planners, shared with us their journeys in the design sphere.

To read these stories, please scan the QR code

PHOTOGRAPHY **STEVE WONG (HONG KONG); DANIEL ADAMS (MALAYSIA); DARREN GABRIEL LEOW (SINGAPORE); FANG WEI KUO (TAIWAN)**

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Making their Mark
Young chefs making a name for themselves after learning from the best fine dining doyens in Singapore and abroad

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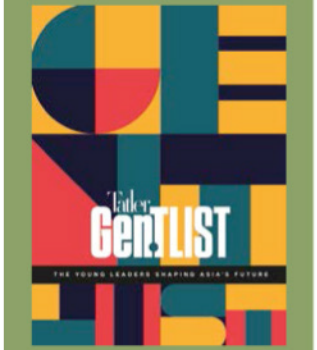

Tatler Gen.T

The New Generation
Tatler's platform for young leaders across Asia has unveiled its newest cohort of Leaders of Tomorrow—individuals recognised for their impact in shaping the region's future.

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Dual-concept cafés and restaurants offering different menus during the day and at night

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Photographer Leslie Heng introduces his favourite image

On the Cover

Tatler
THE BIO CODE

Photography **Darren Gabriel Leow**
Styling **Tok Wei Lun**
Grooming **Gin Tan using Keune Haircosmetics and YSL Beauty**
Outfit **Onitsuka Tiger, Prada**

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Value from Innovation

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Taken using FUJIFILM GFX50S II

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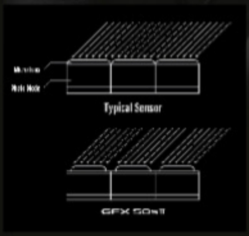

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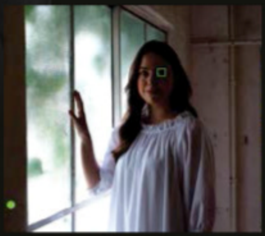

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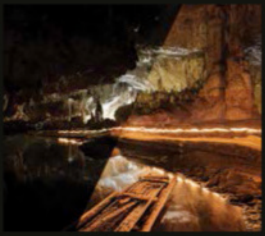

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GFX50S II's pixel pitch of 5.3µm provides it with a remarkable 14 stops of dynamic range, which allows it to gather more light to deliver ultra-high resolution images with the unbeatable combination of high quality G Mount lenses at each pixels.

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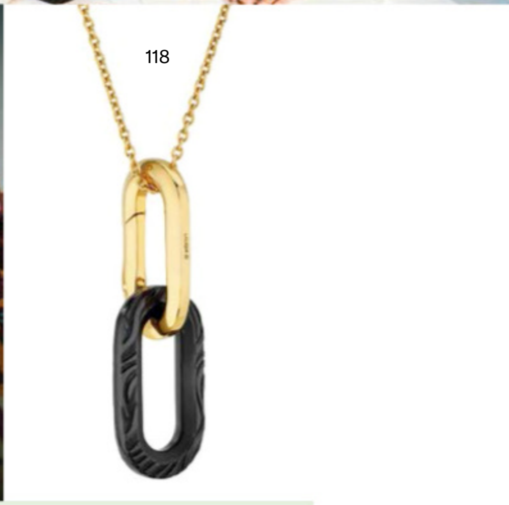
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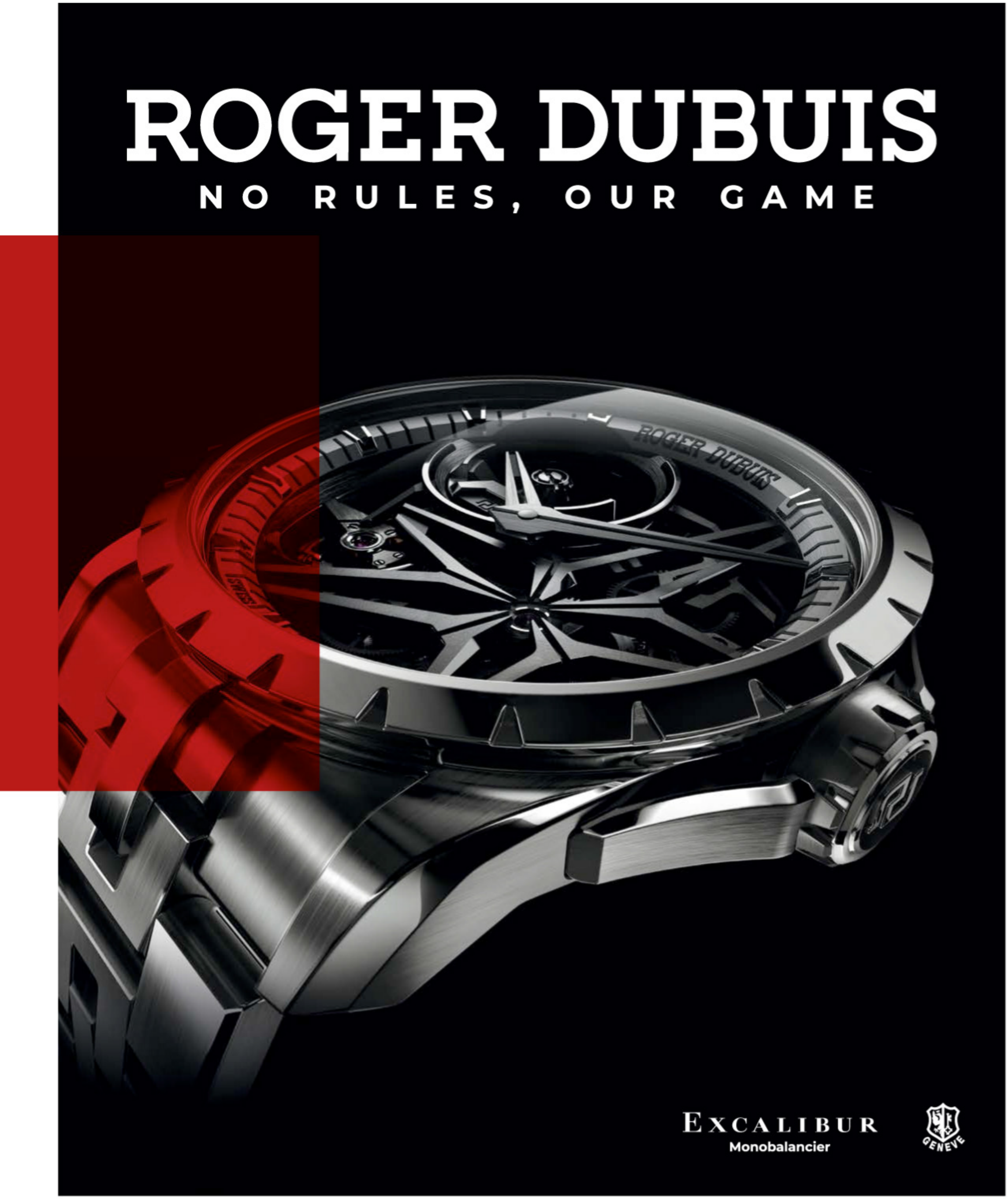
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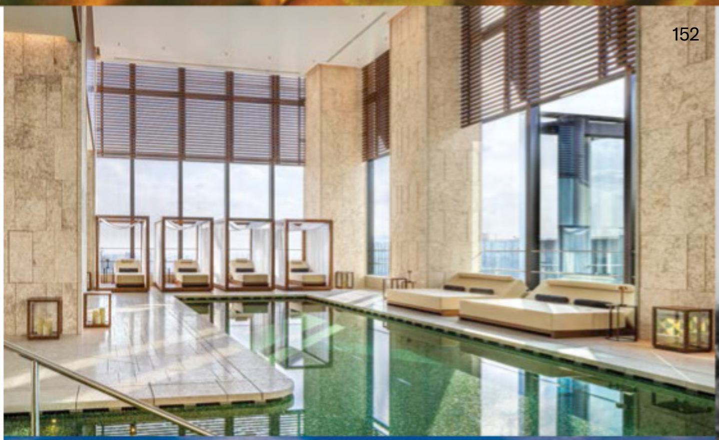
Calling Dr AI

Scientist Dean Ho is focusing his efforts on harnessing artificial intelligence for personalised healthcare



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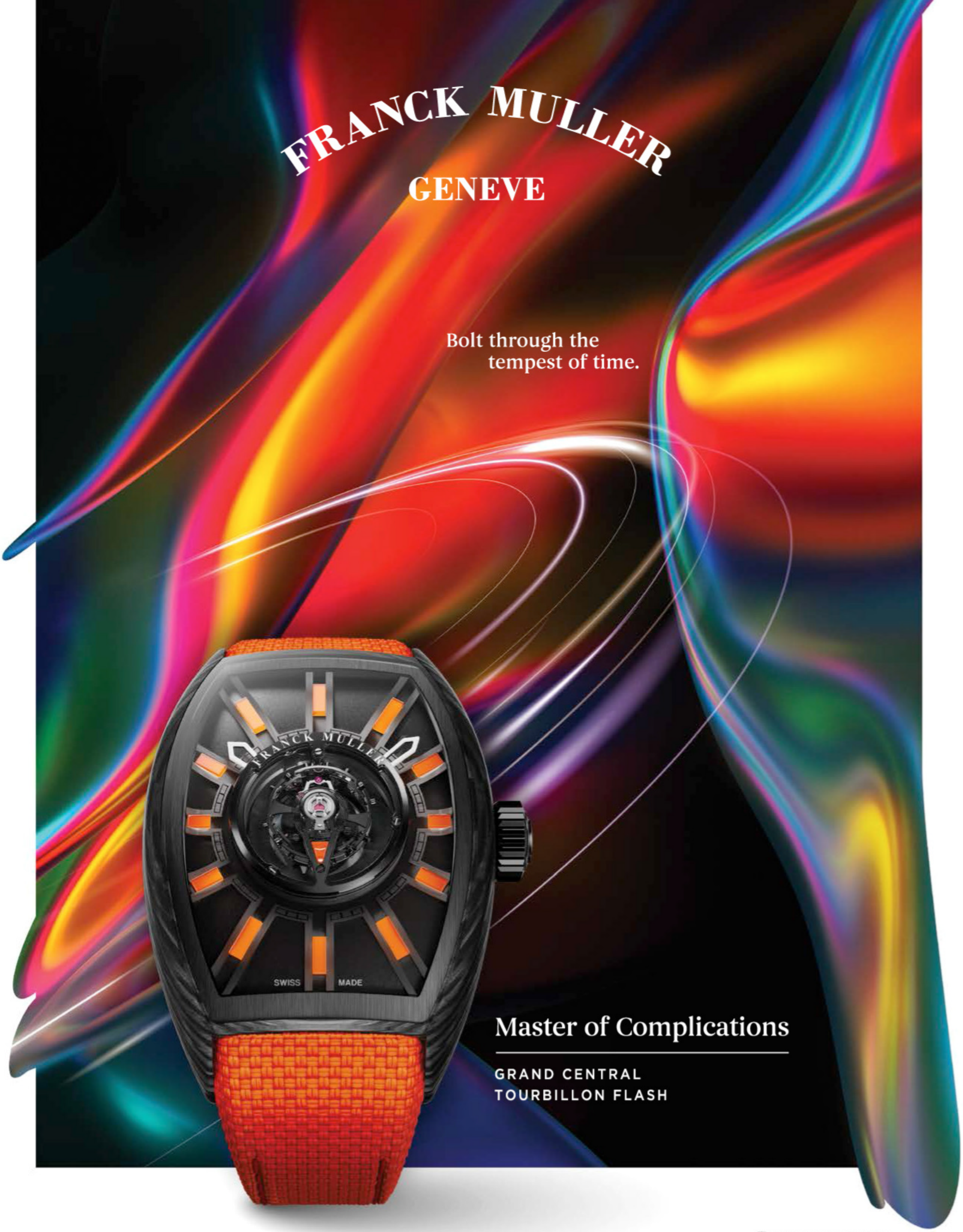
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LABOUR OF LOVE

How does one of the world's most prestigious champagne brands sell bubbly in the immediate aftermath of a pandemic? Lady Gaga and Dom Pérignon's chef de cave Victor Chaperon share their thoughts with Tatler on their second collaboration and what it means to put your back into the act of creation

By Gavin Yeung

AN ICON WOMA

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Man vs Machine

It was Yayoi Kusama, I believe, a dotty genius and celebrated artist, who once said: "I have a flood of ideas in my mind. I just follow my vision."

She makes it sound so simple.

Creativity, ideas and innovation are so often things that we grapple with, trying to make them fit into content and business strategies, to make them inspirational as well as relatable, so much so that too often, we forget that the purest way forward is simply to have a vision and follow it.

Our June issue centres around the theme of "Youth and Innovation" and for months, our team dug deep to find and celebrate the ambitious minds that are shaping our future, those who are thinking outside the proverbial box, and really just trying to envision a better future and lead the rest of us on this journey to believe, act on and support a genuinely good idea.

On our cover this month, we are proud to feature Dean Ho, a scientist harnessing artificial intelligence (AI) for personalised healthcare. Ho, the recipient of last year's Tatler Hero Award, is already pioneering how AI can be used to track cognitive health over time and enable early intervention. With healthcare costs ballooning globally, Ho's research focuses on using AI for precision medicine—not just to save lives, but to also help people stay healthy longer through biohacking. In his vision, how individuals engage with and prompt AI systems could potentially monitor their brain health over time, allowing for treatment if needed. This promises to revolutionise healthcare.

We speak to Gabriel Tan as well, a Singaporean industrial designer who took the bold move in 2020 to relocate to Portugal even during Covid-19. This kick-started collaborations with leading brands, the first being Italian furniture maker B&B Italia. Entitled "Quiet Lines", Tan's collection for B&B Italia's bedroom series aims to inspire tranquillity and elevate daily rituals. The designer will unveil collections with an American maker and a German sofa brand, showing how relocation spurred creativity. He also happens to be a 2019 Gen.T honouree.

Speaking of, this issue marks the launch of this year's Gen.T list, which celebrates 2023's Leaders of Tomorrow. These individuals are hard at work transforming their innovative dreams into reality, and we encourage you to flip to our special Gen.T section to explore the list of honourees and their accomplishments.

Scientist Dean Ho is revolutionising healthcare by harnessing artificial intelligence

We also dive into the world of surfer-activists, passionate individuals who are making waves, both literally and figuratively, by using their platforms to raise awareness about critical issues that impact our world. Their dedication to their chosen causes is truly inspiring, and demonstrates the power of youth and innovation in driving change.

As you immerse yourself in the pages of our June 2023 issue, we hope you'll be inspired by the incredible stories of the creativity, determination and passion that define this generation. These leaders prove that the ideas and innovation are often there; success simply requires a belief in your vision and the grit to see it through.

On this note, I'll leave you with another quote from an artist, the great Quentin Tarantino: "The good ideas will survive."

Now go forth and make yours a reality.

—Jacqueline Tsang, regional head of content

PHOTOGRAPHY DARREN GABRIEL LEOW (HO); ALVIN GOH AND MORGAN HUNG (TSANG)

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cavalier jewellery
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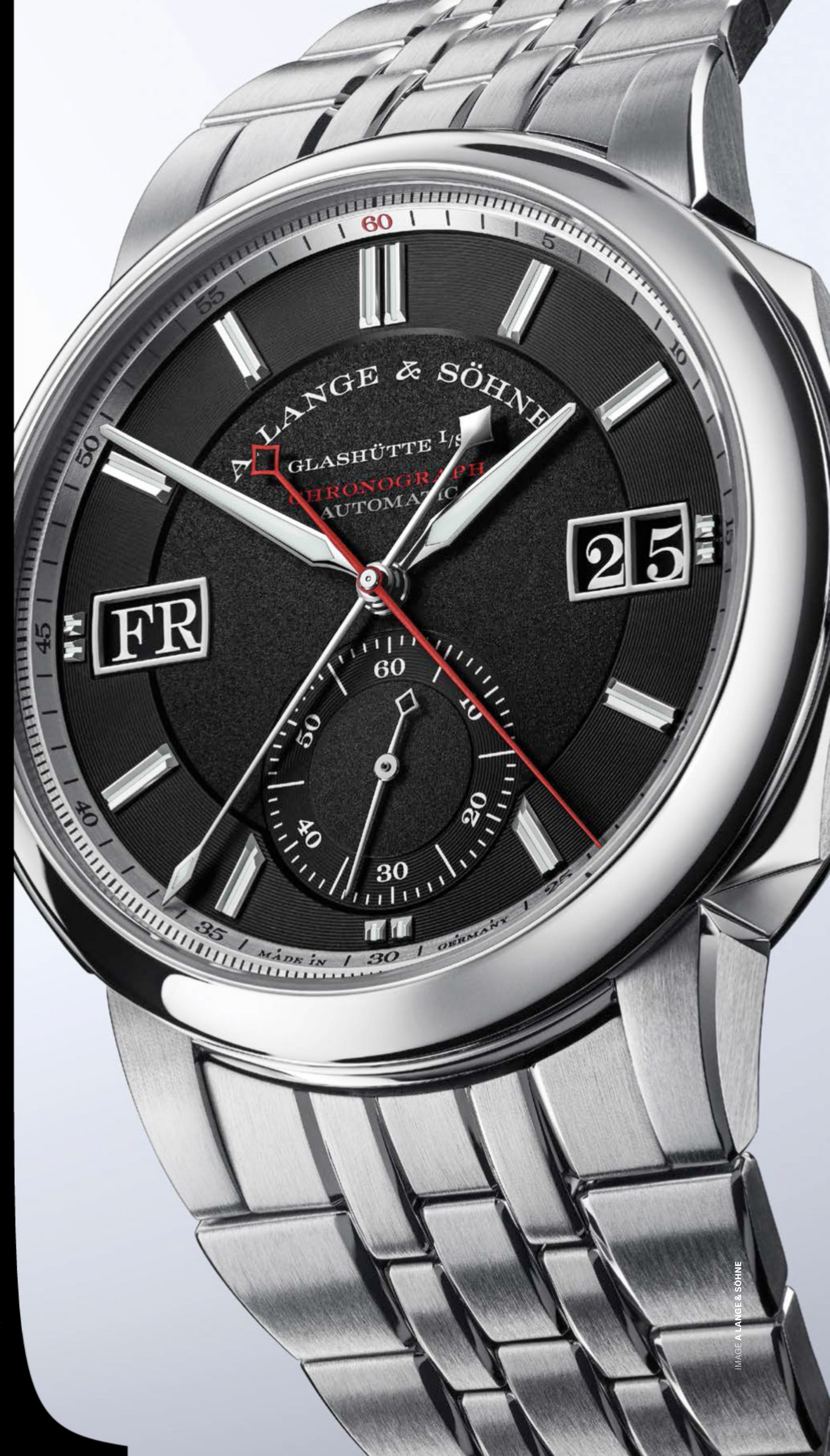
EDITOR'S PICKS

THE WATCH

A Lange & Söhne continues to innovate and impress with the introduction of the Odysseus Chronograph, which is equipped with the new L156.1 calibre—the manufacture's first self-winding chronograph movement.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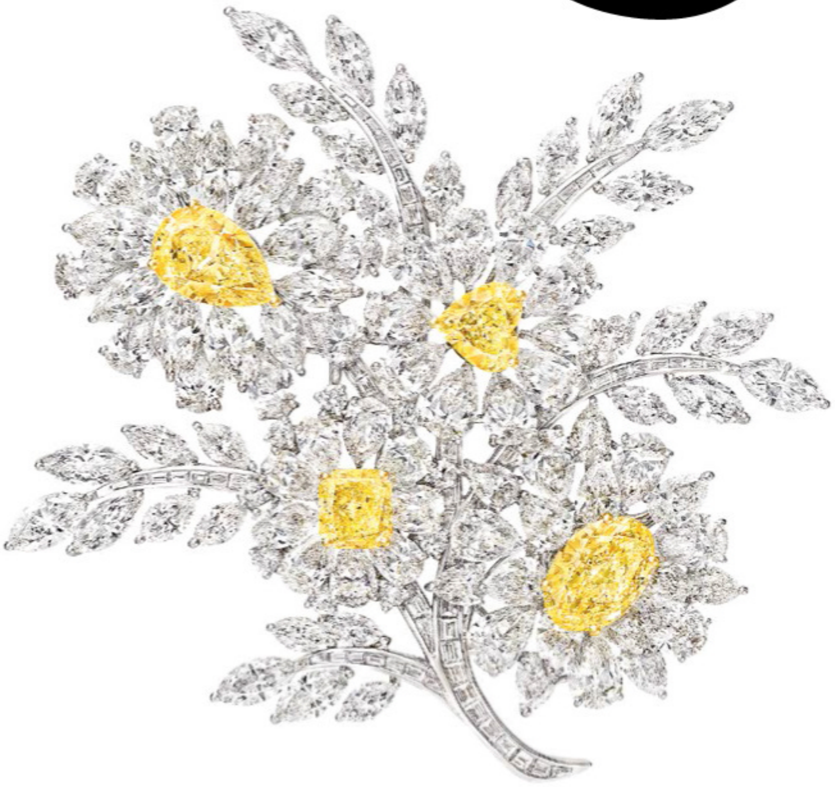

THE BROOCH

As part of its travelling showcase in Asia titled *Exhibition of Rare Jewels*, Graff has invited clients to discover creations such as this multi-shape yellow and white diamond flower brooch. Each yellow diamond is set on its own spring, allowing it to gently quiver with the wearer's movements.

IMAGE **GRAFF**

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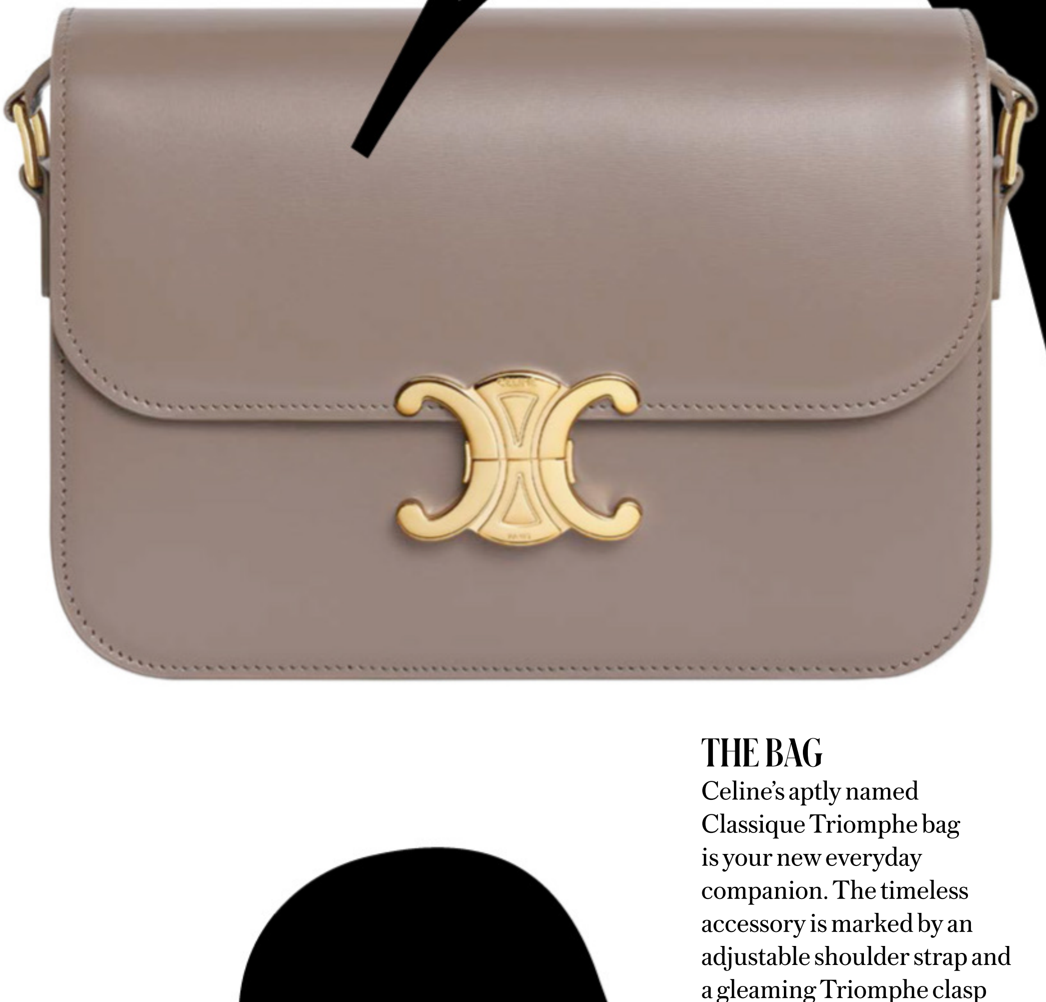


THE BAG

Celine’s aptly named Classique Triomphe bag is your new everyday companion. The timeless accessory is marked by an adjustable shoulder strap and a gleaming Triomphe clasp that keeps your belongings secure. Now, the bag is also available in elegant pebble-hued calfskin leather.

IMAGE **CELINE**

THE GUEST LIST

OLIVIER YOAN

French photographer Olivier Yoan has worked with brands such as Calvin Klein, Jimmy Choo and Roger Vivier. He is also the creative director of online platform The Ené, a directory of eco-conscious businesses and retailers around Europe. For this issue, Yoan photographed the fashion shoot in southern France.

LYLA CHENG

Taiwan-born fashion stylist Lyla Cheng is based between London and Asia. She specialises in photo shoots with storytelling elements and describes her style as "cool, edgy and feminine" and has worked for publications including *Vogue Portugal* and *Numero Tokyo.* For *Tatler*, Cheng styled this month's fashion shoot, which transforms the model into a contemporary elf.

KAREN TEE

Karen Tee finds joy in sparking inspiration and positive action through her work. Her love for writing is only surpassed by her love for yoga, which is why she considers the mat her second home. In this issue, she speaks to scientist Dean Ho, who is on the cover, on how he's harnessing artificial intelligence to find ways to keep individuals in peak health and productivity.

KIU KA YEE

China-born, Hong Kong-raised Kiu Ka Yee is a fashion and portrait photographer who works between Hong Kong, New York and Los Angeles. After studying film-making at the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts, she went to the Art Center College of Design in California, where she received her BFA in photography in 2016. Her work has been featured in *The New York Times* and *Madame Figaro HK*, among many others. This month, she shot Hong Kong designer Kit Wan.

Singaporean industrial designer Gabriel Tan's first collaboration with B&B Italia, meet the sisters behind The Oyster Bank and Kiki's Reserve, and three young chefs making a name for themselves

Tatler
THES

Andrea (pictured left) and Ethel Chua of The Oyster Bank and Kiki's Reserve. **Opposite page:** The Common Man Night Shift's wine programme is complemented by a revamped menu

PHOTOGRAPHY **FRENCHESCAR LIM (THE SISTERS)** IMAGE **COMMON MAN NIGHT SHIFT**

SCENE

CLOSE-UP

Sight Lines

Singaporean industrial designer Gabriel Tan charts a new milestone with his first collaboration with Italian furniture giant B&B Italia *By Hong Xinying*

When Singaporean industrial designer Gabriel Tan made the bold decision in 2020 to relocate to Portugal in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, it helped kick-start a series of momentous collaborations. The first of which is with Italian manufacturer B&B Italia, one of the most recognisable furniture makers in the world.

Titled Quiet Lines, the B&B Italia collection is designed for the bedroom, and crafted in a way to inspire a sense of tranquillity and help elevate daily routines in this personal space. Tan will also soon unveil new collections with a leading American manufacturer as well as a sofa range with a German brand later this year and in 2024, respectively. He has been relishing all the opportunities that his relocation has offered by deepening his professional connections in Europe, while being in close proximity to the workshops where his designs are made.

"Being based in Porto, a city with a growing design culture, has also allowed me to connect with other designers and creatives, which has been a source of inspiration and support," shares the 2019 Gen.T honouree, who is known for his pared-back designs that pair a timeless appeal and attention to craft traditions. His spatial design practice Antimatter has also realised beautiful abodes in Singapore, including an award-winning penthouse that was named one of the winners at the Tatler Homes Design Awards – Singapore in 2022.

Besides helming his eponymous studio, Tan also founded Origin Made, a design collectibles brand with objects crafted by Portuguese artisans. He is also creative director for the Japanese furniture brand Ariake.

His latest collection for B&B Italia was launched during Milan Design Week this April, in conjunction with the Salone del Mobile.Milano furniture fair. The designer tells us more about his creative journey thus far and his milestone-making collection with B&B Italia.

It has been two years since you moved to Portugal. What are some of the highlights of your relocation so far?

Moving to Portugal has been an incredible experience. On a personal level, the move has allowed me to explore a new culture and a more self-reflective way of life. Porto is a beautiful city with a rich history, and I've enjoyed getting to know its people and traditions. I've also travelled a bit throughout the country and explored the neighbouring [cities in] Spain. Professionally, the move to Portugal has opened up new opportunities and collaborations for me. With its well-connected airport, my relative proximity to major design cities such as Milan, Copenhagen, Stockholm, and even New York has enabled me to build closer relationships with the furniture brands I design for, or have been wanting to collaborate with. I've also been able to work with Portuguese artisans and manufacturers to start our own brand Origin Made, exploring new materials and techniques.

How would you describe your design philosophy and how it has evolved over the years?

My design philosophy centres around striving for essential and emotional designs that are grounded in an understanding of materials, craft and culture. I believe that good design should be accessible and enduring, and it should enhance our daily lives in a meaningful way. I'm always in awe of the richness and diversity of craft and design the world over, and inspired by the attention to detail, materiality and cultural symbolism in traditional crafts, especially in Asia; I also appreciate the minimalism and simplicity of Scandinavian design, as well as the elegance and sophistication of Italian design. I seek to amalgamate and integrate some of these experiences and values into my work.

How did the collaboration with B&B Italia come about?

I first visited B&B Italia's headquarters and factory in 2019, where we had a productive discussion about our mutual interest in creating furniture that responds to the changing needs and lifestyles of people today. We kept in touch, met again in 2020, and they suggested that I explore designing a family of furniture for the bedroom. I spent almost a year thinking and working on the design of this collection, and eventually presented my concepts to them in 2021, where they agreed to embark on this collaboration. My domicile in Porto allowed frequent trips to Italy to meet with B&B Italia, and this sustained engagement from concept presentation to product development, prototyping and reviews allowed us to refine the designs together and ensure that the final products met our shared vision.

IMAGES **GABRIEL TAN**

***Tell us more about your B&B Italia Quiet Lines collection*.**

Quiet Lines is a four-piece collection of furniture that is designed to enhance the daily rituals we engage in around the bedroom. Each item is designed with a focus on simplicity, functionality and timeless elegance. The inspiration behind the collection comes from the idea of creating a sanctuary in the bedroom, a space where we can retreat from the world and connect with ourselves. The Quiet Lines collection is designed to facilitate this sense of peace and tranquillity through clean lines, soft curves, and thoughtful details.

What were some challenges that you experienced while working on this collection?

Working with B&B Italia's team in Novedrate in Italy was a unique experience, as they do things "the old-school way", as their R&D director likes to put it. The prototyping process was not focused on adhering to technical drawings or CAD (computer-aided design) files provided by me, but with an acceptance that this was going to be an evolutionary process and the end product could be quite different from the initial design. We reviewed each round of prototypes at their factory together, making changes to the prototypes on the spot, this process was made possible by their in-house R&D Lab. I benefitted greatly from their wealth of experience and every change we made was always about how to improve the end product: to make it more beautiful, easier to use, visually lighter, or structurally stronger, and never about cost cutting.

How does this collection address climate concerns?

We designed the collection to be timeless and adaptable so that it can be used and enjoyed for many years to come. Each component in Quiet Lines has been designed to be easily disassembled and separated so that each part can be individually repainted, reupholstered, refinished or repaired when needed. This results in the reduction of waste and an extension of the product's lifespan. For a hotel or a consumer who values longevity, this is a game-changer. We take care to select materials that are biodegradable or recyclable, such as natural leather and steel so that they can be safely disposed of or recycled. We opted not to select chrome as one of the finishes for this collection because of its environmental impact. We also took care to minimise waste in the production process, using efficient assembly methods and optimising material usage by using the thinnest steel profile possible.

What does "quiet time" mean to you, personally and as a designer?

To me, quiet time represents a moment of "me time", of peace and contemplation in our busy lives. As a designer, I believe that creating spaces and objects that facilitate this sense of tranquillity and introspection is an important part of my work. I try to bring this sense of calm and simplicity into my work, whether it's through the use of natural materials and finishes, or by creating spaces and objects that encourage a sense of stillness and reflection. Personally, I find that spending time in nature is one of the most relaxing and rejuvenating activities I can engage in. Whether it's going for a hike in the hills or swimming in the river, being in nature helps me to slow down and connect with the world around me. I also enjoy reading and long walks, which are both activities that help me to cultivate a sense of inner calm and focus.

How much does circularity shape your overall design philosophy?

It's important for designers to consider the entire life cycle of their products, from production to use to disposal. This means designing products that are durable and long-lasting, and that can be easily repaired, reused or recycled. Circularity is an important part of sustainable design, and designers have a responsibility to consider the environmental footprint of their work.

Which is your favourite B&B Italia design of all time?

The Up armchair and ottoman by Gaetano Pesce. I love the bold and surprising forms of this design, its powerful symbolism of womanhood, but also the innovative way it was originally produced; it is delivered flat with the foam self-inflating at the end user's home. The Up chair genuinely challenged our expectations of what furniture can be and was far ahead of its time.

What is a material or colour that you find most timeless?

Wood has been used in furniture design for centuries, and it has a warmth and natural beauty that is hard to replicate with other materials. Sustainably-sourced wood is an environmentally-friendly and durable choice for furniture design. I am drawn to earthy, natural tones, as these colours have a

A bench from the Quiet Lines collection by Gabriel Tan for B&B Italia. **Opposite page:** Quiet Lines is a four-piece collection of furniture for the bedroom

calming and grounding effect, and they are versatile enough to work well in a variety of different spaces. Natural materials and colours from nature can help to bring a sense of connection to the natural world into our interiors, which is becoming increasingly important in today's high-tech and digital world.

Is there a craft technique that you find most interesting right now and why?
Weaving is a technique that has been used for thousands of years, and it has a timeless appeal. Hand-weaving is also a traditional craft that might be in danger of being lost due to a move to industrial means of production. I am particularly drawn to incorporating weaving and other traditional craft techniques in contemporary design, to create meaningful and authentic products. An example is the Meia Lua armchair and the Weaver's chair I designed for Origin Made, which was launched at the recent Milan Design Week.

What keeps you inspired?
I love to explore new places and cultures, and I find that traveling can open up new ways of seeing and thinking about the world. I like wandering off the beaten track and am always looking for inspiration in the sights, sounds, and textures of the world around me, observing people, and finding inspiration in the everyday objects and rituals of life.

Tell us more about your upcoming projects.
I have completed a lounge seating and occasional table collection that's launching this summer with a renowned American furniture company, as well as a sofa with a German brand that will be launched by early 2024. There are strong business relations between Portugal and its former African colonies, and this has also brought me to Mozambique where we are now working on a hospitality design project.

Luxury Status

Many credit cards for the elite come with perks aplenty, but none are quite like the updated offerings of the UOB Reserve Card

There are credits cards, and then there is the UOB Reserve Card that unlocks some of the world's most exclusive benefits, premium experiences and luxuries that money alone cannot buy. We are talking about the ultimate best—think red-carpet access and treatment specifically catered to the most well-heeled, well-travelled individuals.

The card now boasts newly refreshed privileges that are even more varied and exclusive, all at the fingertips of its members. Offering the finest experiences and benefits across dining, travel, retail and other lifestyle categories, the UOB Reserve Card will delight and surprise even the most discerning spenders.

RESERVED JUST FOR YOU

Made for those who take joy in savouring the most in-demand epicurean experiences in town, the new Reserve Dining programme lets UOB Reserve Card members skip the waitlist and instead have priority access to highly coveted tables at Michelin-starred restaurants here. The list of 10 restaurants is specifically curated to include those with a long waitlist, such as Burnt Ends, Cloudstreet, Hamamoto and Odette, with pre-booked tables available for cardmembers to make reservations for every Wednesday.

THE JET-SET LIFE

Generous rewards are part of what UOB Reserve Card members will receive on sign-up and membership renewal: get 100,000 air miles (equivalent to a return-trip business-class ticket to the Maldives) upon becoming a member, and an additional 100,000 air miles when you renew the membership (and hit a total spend of $250,000 per membership year).

UOB Reserve Card privileges also facilitate seamless ease of travel and ensure that you indulge your wanderlust in luxurious comfort. Cue unlimited access to more than 1,300 VIP airport lounges, along with expedited immigration tracks at more than 450 international airports courtesy of complimentary Meet and Greet Services, as well as complimentary limousine transfers (two and four per calendar year respectively).

No time to manage your travel plans? Enlist the service of a dedicated Travel Concierge Manager, who will assist with all your travel needs, from flight, hotel and transfer arrangements to miles redemption and the curation of bespoke itineraries.

LIVE THE HIGH LIFE

UOB Reserve Card members also enjoy accelerated rewards of 2.4 air miles per dollar on foreign currency spend, be it at physical stores overseas or on websites such as Farfetch and Net-a-Porter. Those who go on a shopping spree at boutiques locally will be rewarded as well, with 2 air miles per dollar spent at luxury fashion, watch and jewellery houses such as Hermès, Chanel and The Hour Glass.

Beyond this, the UOB Reserve Card grants access to exclusive lifestyle memberships and activities, such as a set number of complimentary golf rounds at the exclusive Sentosa Golf Club every year, and special green rates at 50 participating golf clubs across Southeast Asia. For those who prefer sailing into the sunset, cardmembers are entitled to special charter privileges that apply to luxurious vessels such as the 128-feet superyacht, Star of the Sea.

And the cherry on top? Special invitations to coveted events spanning luxury, dining, culture and so much more. More than a trusted payment essential, the UOB Reserve Card grants you red-carpet access to some of the most exceptional experiences the world has to offer.

The UOB Reserve Card is by invitation only. If you would like to find out more, visit uob.com.sg/reserve for details.

ASIA'S MOST INFLUENTIAL

Future World

Mighty Jaxx founder Jackson Aw shares how the integrated future culture platform is embracing technological innovations that combine the best of both the physical and digital worlds

By Hashirin Nurin Hashimi

IMAGE **DARREN GABRIEL LEOW**

While Jackson Aw's passion is in building brands and business, "my vision for what they can be is constantly evolving", says the founder and CEO of Mighty Jaxx.

This philosophy pervades through the integrated future culture platform that designs and produces digital and phygital collectibles in partnership with some of the biggest brands in the world. "As a brand full of pop culture enthusiasts and geeks, we're always thinking of what excites us; where do we see it going; and what could make it more enjoyable for us," says Aw. The company has collaborated with global brands including Netflix, Disney, Formula One, Hasbro and Toei Animation, shipping millions of phygital collectibles to more than 80 countries every year.

"With Mighty Jaxx, it doesn't end with just the physical items you purchase—it extends into the digital space through digital authentication, AR [augmented reality] journeys, access to our Xtended Xperience [immersive digital experiences through the Mighty Jaxx app], and more," Aw explains. "We are also working to bring fan favourite IPs [intellectual properties] to life via IRL [in real life] experiences to allow fans to truly immerse themselves in iconic scenes and connect with their favourite IPs or characters on another level."

This month, Mighty Jaxx, in collaboration with streaming platform Netflix, is bringing *Stranger Things – The Encounter: Singapore* to our shores. "Beyond world-class sets and special effects that recreate iconic locations from the series, in true Mighty Jaxx fashion, we're pushing the boundaries of our creativity by taking fans to the phygital realm," enthuses Aw, on the interactive experience based on the science fiction horror television series, *Stranger Things*. Additionally, XPass, a proprietary platform by Mighty Jaxx, allows guests to create a unique digital journal capturing their journey and unlock special rewards and redeem exclusive merchandise.

New technologies are crucial to the strategic direction of Mighty Jaxx. "We are constantly looking for ways to incorporate them in our products and improve our offerings," says Aw, who adds that the company has incorporated blockchain technology into its products since late 2018, and developed a patent-pending process to embed an NFC [near-field communication] chip into its collectibles, allowing users to authenticate and unlock content using its app, taking its products from physical to phygital.

The platform released its first digital collectible collection in 2021, and its first metaverse experience last year. Meanwhile, entry to *Stranger Things – The Encounter: Singapore* will be through NFT (non-fungible token) ticketing. "While the tickets are NFTs, ticket holders do not need to be experienced with NFTs in general. They will have access to the ticket/NFT via the Mighty Jaxx app even if they do not have a digital wallet. To me, the best form of Web3 incorporation is when users do not even realise that they are using Web3 technology," muses Aw.

"We will continue to work on creating new value-added fandom experiences online and in hybrid retail locations, and become fandoms' super app that integrate new tech initiatives such as 3D, AR and VR [virtual reality] and blockchain collectibles."

BEYOND-THE-BOX THINKERS

Each month, as we celebrate a local member of our Asia's Most Influential list, we also shine a light on a member of each of the lists produced by our publications around the region. This month: other innovators

HONG KONG

At the individual level, dietary choice could be one of the most effective ways to reduce our impact on climate change, so researchers and scientists are racing to bring greener alternatives to our plates.

But while many biotech companies focus on finding alternatives to meat products, Avant Meats co-founder and CEO Carrie Chan has trained her sights on seafood, one of the last widely consumed animal proteins to be still sourced largely from the wild.

Avant Meats is a pioneer of cultivated fish protein, which is grown in a lab from fish stem cells. The result is seafood that is virtually indistinguishable from the original—while also being safe, clean, sustainable and, soon, economically viable. It's a winning—and perhaps ultimately necessary—recipe for success.

PHILIPPINES

Traffic in Philippine cities is notoriously heavy; in major cities such as Cebu and Metro Manila, congestion often comes with personal and economic consequences. George Royeca co-founded and helms popular motorcycle-hailing platform Angkas in a bid to make transport more reliable. Not only can the bikes easily wind around other vehicles, but they are also able to navigate the narrow streets of many Philippine locales. Users can book motorcycle taxis and couriers using the app, and Royeca has plans to expand beyond the two major cities.

TAIWAN

Arthur Huang, co-founder and CEO of Miniwiz, is seen as a pioneer of loop economy building material solutions. But what he does sounds closer to magic: he turns discarded plastics, clothing and even cigarette butts into sailboats, skyscrapers and Nike store interiors.

In 2005, Huang set up Miniwiz with his co-founder Jarvis Liu in Taipei, with the big dream of "helping shift mass consumption to a closed-loop model"—in other words, achieving zero waste. With such high-profile projects as the EcoArk Pavilion at the 2010 Taipei International Flower Expo (which was made out of 1.5 million recycled PET bottles) in its portfolio, Miniwiz has been recognised by the World Economic Forum as a technology pioneer in the energy, environment and infrastructure space.

MALAYSIA

Inspired by *Star Trek* re-runs that she used to watch as a child in her family home in Johor, Florence Tan has boldly gone where no Malaysian has (worked at) before—Nasa. She began her career at the Goddard Space Flight Center in 1985, and has been designing mass spectrometers since 1991. Of the eight that have been built, seven have been launched to Saturn, Saturn's moon Titan, Mars and the Moon.

Today, Tan is the deputy chief technologist for the Nasa Science Mission Directorate, as well as chair of the Small Spacecraft Coordination Group, where she plays an important role in identifying necessary technologies for future missions. Tan has been recognised with the Nasa Exceptional Achievement Medal, the Robert Goddard Exceptional Achievement and multiple Nasa Special Act Awards.

IMAGES KENNETH LIM (HONG KONG); IMRAN SULAIMAN (MALAYSIA); JEMUEL REMOLONA (PHILIPPINES)

ONE TO KNOW

The Business of Happiness

The F&B industry is a cut-throat one, but for Andrea and Ethel Chua, the founders of The Oyster Bank restaurants and cocktail service Kiki's Reserve, the recipe for success is simple: doing right by people *By Annabel Tan. Photography by Frenchescar Lim*

Ethel and Andrea Chua may have been in the F&B business for about nine years now, but there is little known about the sibling proprietors of The Oyster Bank restaurants and cocktail service Kiki's Reserve. The 30-year-old Ethel and her younger sister Andrea, 27, keep their Instagram profiles private and, until now, have declined media interviews, preferring instead to keep the spotlight on their buzzy F&B ventures.

"We didn't feel ready to come out and talk about what we do yet," says Ethel. Andrea adds that while they still do not feel completely ready, they are taking the advice of one of their biggest supporters, whom they met through Kiki's Reserve, and *Tatler* friend Paige Parker. "She always tells me to say yes to life," shares Andrea. "So we decided, let's do it."

The sisters made their first foray into F&B in 2014 with the now-shuttered underground bar HopHeads. In 2019, they opened their second business, The Oyster Bank, in Funan mall, offering a more casual and approachable take on an oyster bar, serving what Andrea describes as "an adult happy meal": oysters and bubbly. From the first day of opening, the concept was a winner and the crowd kept coming. But when the Covid-19 restrictions kicked in months later, both HopHeads and The Oyster Bank took a hit and the sisters, like many in the F&B industry at the time, had to pivot their businesses.

"For us, it was important not to let any staff go because many of them have been with us for a very long time, some even till today," says Andrea. "We had to find a way to keep them and cover the costs." With their shared interest in cocktails, the duo came up with the idea of a freshly bottled cocktail delivery service and Kiki's Reserve was born in March 2020.

"I think we were pretty lucky because we didn't do much marketing; we just announced it on Instagram and it exploded," recalls Ethel, adding that they were early adopters of the cocktail delivery concept at the time and invested a lot into their packaging and branding, which resulted in many customers ordering them as gifts.

Since its launch, Kiki's Reserve has counted renowned brands such as Bulgari, Cartier, Porsche and Visa as clients. While the sisters feel they have been very lucky in their entrepreneurial journey so far, a lot of their success is clearly rooted in their hands-on approach and willingness to go the extra mile.

Ethel handles business operations and human resources, while Andrea takes care of marketing, finance and brand building. But both of them can also be found washing dishes in The Oyster Bank outlets, including the third and newest one in Tanjong Pagar. "We're always on the ground and make it a point to work in every kitchen we have so we can learn the business better," says Andrea. "It also helps us understand the [staff members'] perspectives when they have issues or suggestions. And when [they] recognise that we're here working hard alongside them, it builds team rapport and they're willing to do the same for us. It's the kind of team money can't buy—we spent years building this and we're here for the long run."

Since dining restrictions were lifted last year, Kiki's Reserve has hit pause on individual deliveries and orders, shifting its focus to live bartending events and tailored cocktail experiences. Both Ethel and Andrea work on every Kiki's Reserve event from beginning to end, starting with discussions with clients on their needs to customising the drinks and being on site to execute. "Whether it's Kiki's Reserve, HopHeads or The Oyster Bank, we're in the business of happiness and we're here to give people the best experience possible," says Andrea. "Every time someone breaks a glass in our restaurant or at an event and they apologise, I say, 'No, it just means you're having a good time.'"

For them, the biggest lesson they have learnt so far is that they should always do right by people, be it in the product they are selling or with customers, suppliers and staff. Returning customers are a sign they are moving in the right direction, says Andrea. "We're very grateful and never take it for granted. It also means we have to always up our game. That's why we strive to go above and beyond, and we're trying to inculcate this approach in our team members as well."

The sisters have certainly made their mark in the hospitality industry here, but they are only just getting started. "The world is our oyster," says Andrea. "We want to improve our cocktails and bring back deliveries for Kiki's Reserve in the fourth quarter of this year." There are also plans to diversify with bar and nightlife concepts, as well as experiment with virtual brands. "There are so many other things we want to do," she says. "There's no specific end goal; we just want to continue doing what we do and hopefully make more people happy."

HAIR AND MAKE-UP **BENEDICT CHOO USING NARS**

Andrea (pictured left) and Ethel Chua, founders and directors of The Oyster Bank and Kiki's Reserve

Coach CAFE
CLASSIC PANCAKES
CHICKEN & WAFFLES
AVOCADO TOAST
FRIED CHICKEN SANDWICH
ALL AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER
CAESAR SALAD
DONUTS
ZESTY LEMON CURD
CHERRIES & CREAM
ESPRESSO
BLACK
WHITE
MOCHA
HOT CHOCOLATE
EXTRAS
ESPRESSO SHOT
OAT
ICED
COACH

OFF MENU

Two in One

Maximise your visit at these dual-concept cafés and restaurants offering different menus during the day and at night

By Dudi Aureus

EAT, PLAY, SHOP

COACH CAFÉ

Luxury fashion brand Coach recently launched Coach Play Singapore Shophouse, a three-storey dining and retail concept store on Keong Saik Road that operates as a café by day and a dessert bar by night. After day shopping, guests can head to the café and savour New York-inspired brunch staples and artisanal coffee created in collaboration with home-grown brand Brawn & Brains Coffee. Signatures include the classic pancakes served with maple syrup, mixed berries jam, and homemade kaya for a local touch. Come night, the space morphs into a dessert bar that pays tribute to Coach's rich heritage with creations named after various brand codes, including Hangtag, Rexy and Signature C, and dishes such as The Hangtag Surprise, comprising vanilla ice cream and mixed berries compote with a chocolate hangtag.

DAY TO NIGHT

COMMON MAN COFFEE ROASTERS

Home-grown café Common Man Coffee Roasters, which has outlets on Martin Road, Joo Chiat Road and Stanley Street, as well as at Sentosa, is famed for its speciality coffee drinks and classic brunch dishes. When the sun sets, these spaces transition into their after-dark extensions dubbed Common Man Night Shift, which specialises in natural wines. There are 80 labels on offer, all sourced from small-batch producers who believe in the "nothing added, nothing taken away" philosophy. Complementing the night-shift wine programme is a revamped menu featuring a variety of dishes that blend culinary influences from various cuisines, from the cacio e pepe udon pasta (udon noodles tossed in a decadent cheese and pepper sauce) to the Middle Eastern favourite hummus, made with chickpeas, tahini, laksa leaves and coriander to give it a local twist.

IMAGES COACH CAFÉ; COMMON MAN NIGHT SHIFT; BINCHO; FIFTYFIVE COFFEE BAR

DOUBLE TROUBLE

BINCHO AT HUA BEE

When serial restaurateur and Unlisted Collection founder Loh Lik Peng took over Hua Bee at Moh Guan Terrace in 2013, he decided to share the venue with the resident noodle shop auntie to help preserve traditional architecture and local food. The fishball noodle shop, which was passed down to the auntie by her late father, has been operating in the same location since the 1930s. The auntie dishes out her fishball and minced meat noodles in the coffee shop with tiled walls and vintage furnishings during the day, but when dusk sets in, the mood becomes more cyberpunk and grungy as Japanese yakitori and bar Bincho at Hua Bee takes over. Diners are in for a treat with a selection of modern Japanese fare, and yakitori featuring different parts of the chicken. There is a variety of inspired cocktails too, such as the Yuzu Highball, concocted with whiskey, yuzu and soda.

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

FIFTYFIVE COFFEE BAR

Coffee or cocktails? There is no need to choose one or the other at coffee bar and cocktail lounge FiftyFive Coffee Bar, which is borne out its owners Nick Liu and Harold Koh's desire to create a place that combines the best of both worlds. The minimalist space offers unique coffee and tea drinks during the day. Interesting options include the manuka honey miso latte boosted by a shot of espresso and miso-infused milk—best had with any of the freshly baked pastries and light bites. Stay through the evening and enjoy a concise menu of flavour-forward and expertly crafted cocktails, beers and seafood-centric bar bites. More than a destination for food and drinks, the dual-concept space doubles as an art gallery where local artists are invited to showcase their works.

My Top Shot

Each month, *Tatler* invites a photographer to introduce their favourite image. This month: Leslie Heng

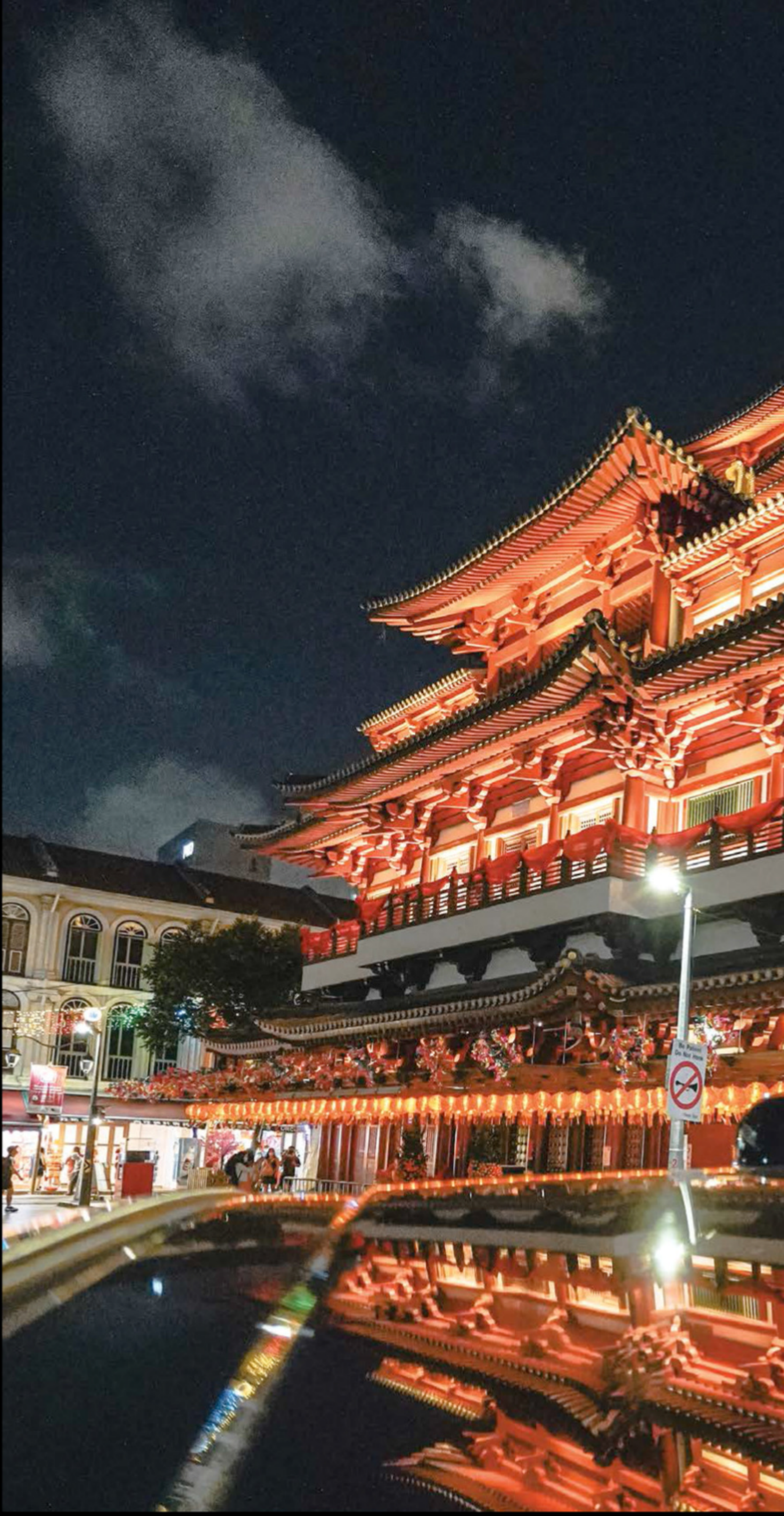
By Hashirin Nurin Hashimi

Located in the heart of Chinatown, the Buddha Tooth Relic Temple & Museum is illuminated only on special occasions—and photographer Leslie Heng managed to capture the majestic sight once, after shooting the Chinese New Year light-up in Chinatown.

"I was looking for something interesting to frame the shot and I saw a taxi parked in the foreground. I went right up and got my lens on the taxi top, which proved to be a great reflective surface," shares Heng, on how he captured the image featured. "The taxi driver, puzzled by my actions, was getting mad at me, but by then, I already got my shot. I showed him previews of what I had taken on my camera's screen, and he smiled and gave me a thumbs up."

With his images often characterised by architectural elements such as colours, light, lines and symmetry, Heng says: "I'm strongly attracted by the beauty of spaces and architecture. I use them constantly to create my pictures."

The self-taught photographer, who picked up the camera only a decade ago, sparked by what he calls the "Instagram revolution", considers himself a perfectionist when it comes to getting the shot. "I'd shoot over and over again until I get what I want," he says. "After all, elements such as light and weather, which you can't control, can affect [how] an image [turns out]."



By the Water

Dive into Seascape, a stylish condominium at Sentosa Cove jointly developed by Ho Bee Land and IOI Properties Singapore

According to feng shui principles, water is an auspicious element associated with prosperity and good fortune—which explains why waterfront homes are so highly desired. In the exclusive Sentosa Cove enclave, the Seascape condominium is one particular property that stands out.

Jointly developed by Ho Bee Land and IOI Properties Singapore, the residential gem, comprising two eight-storey blocks, offers a wide range of units for individuals and families alike, including two villa duplexes that each has its private pool, 18 penthouses, and various three- and four-bedroom units. All units are accessed via their own private lift lobby and boast floor plans that are more spacious than the average apartment on the main island.

Positioned at the southernmost tip of Singapore, Seascape has become an investment-worthy property for its unrivalled 360-degree views of the sea and marina, the low-density neighbourhood and its unique address. Beyond being prized by those who desire to sink into the beauty of its maritime setting, there is a bevy of amenities for its close-knit community to enjoy, including concierge services, a clubhouse, a gym and a swimming pool. The area will also soon benefit from the upcoming completion of the first phase of the Sentosa-Brani master plan, which will expand the island's existing amenities and recreational offerings.

"Everybody will want to have a waterfront property in Singapore; there are no real comparisons on the main island that can offer all the attributes in Seascape and other Sentosa Cove developments," states Loh Lee Hong, general manager of sales and marketing at Ho Bee Land. "Nowhere else in Singapore can offer you the kind of lifestyle that a low-density neighbourhood like Sentosa Cove can."

ABOVE AND BEYOND

One of Seascape's two villa duplexes recently received a beautiful makeover by Architology Interiors and sold for close to $21 million. Dubbed a "super penthouse" due to its impressive size, the fully furnished 6,631-square-feet unit's new look was realised by a design team that has already worked closely with Ho Bee Land on another show apartment in the nearby Cape Royale condominium.

Clockwise, from top left: Furnishings in the master suite of the recently made-over villa duplex at Seascape are orientated to face the sea; this unit comes with its own infinity-edge swimming pool; the family room features curving shelves that reference the movement of waves; the enclosed courtyard is the perfect spot for afternoon tea; the backlit wall panels create a striking backdrop for the dining area. **Opposite page:** The living room features a recessed ceiling with a lighting feature that evokes twinkling stars in the sky

Among its most desirable qualities are the unblocked views of the sea. "This penthouse is at the most southern tip of Singapore; you can get an almost 360-degree, unblocked view," declares Loh.

WATERFRONT LIVING

Being presented with an open brief might prove tempting for the design firm to go all out to impress. But rather than go overboard with opulence, it gave the sea-facing unit subtle aesthetic and practical touches that profoundly emphasise its association with waterfront living.

As a starting point, Architology Interiors sought to craft a space that "embodies everything it means to live in a penthouse as exclusive as this," explains Terrence Quah, the firm's co-founder and the lead designer of this project. "We wanted the owners to enjoy a sublime experience of the amazing panoramic setting; more than just appreciating the view, [we wanted them] to feel as if living in the space [gives them] an inextricable connection to the sea."

At the entrance, the glass doors of the lift lobby facilitate immediate views of the sea. The surfaces here sport a mirrored finish that reflects the sea and the sky, while a group of tables mirrors the shapes of the islands in the distance.

On the first floor, the Carrara marble flooring is a fitting backdrop to the blue tones in the living room, which create a soothing link to the sea. Overhead, the recessed ceiling features fibre optic lights that twinkle in the evening to mimic the Milky Way. The staircase also makes a grand statement with its handsome oak handrails and backlit walls.

Upon arriving on the second floor, one is greeted by a full-height green wall that forms a verdant backdrop to a courtyard that was converted into an indoor-outdoor space. In the master suite, pivoting doors separate the dressing area from the master bedroom and creates a dramatic transition to the sweeping views of the sea.

"We're very proud of the fact that the end result is accurate to what we presented in the client discussions, or even exceeds what we presented," says Quah. "We push ourselves hard to ensure this in every one of our projects, and this penthouse was no exception."

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MAKING THEIR MARK

Spirited and assured, these three young chefs are making a name for themselves after learning from the best fine dining doyens in Singapore and abroad

By Lu Yawen. Photography by Frenchescar Lim

TARIQ HELOU

CHEF-OWNER, FLEURETTE

Tariq Helou has a sense of quiet calmness about him. It is a quality that spills over into what he does at his restaurant Fleurette, an oasis of natural dark wood, exposed brick walls, bare cement floors and curved corners. Tucked away on Rangoon Road, it is quite the opposite of the district it resides in, the vibrant and chaotic Little India.

The 28-year-old first came on the radar when he opened Division Supper Club in 2019 with his childhood friend Aidan Wee. As one of the underground pop-up supper clubs that made up the wave of young chefs dabbling in private dining four years ago, it stood out from the crowd with an ever-changing location, from Chijmes to Fortune Centre.

It was then that diners got their first taste of Helou's delicate and intentional dishes, a meld of Japanese, French and Singaporean much like his own ethnicity of half-Lebanese, a quarter Japanese and a quarter Chinese. After completing his national service, he headed straight to Switzerland's César Ritz Colleges, ranked the 6th best hospitality school worldwide in the QS World University Rankings for Hospitality and Leisure Management.

He then spent a few years working in Geneva, Paris and Tokyo under the tutelage of legendary fine dining toques the likes of Philippe Chevrier of two-Michelin-starred Domaine de Châteauvieux, Stéphane Pitré of one-Michelin-starred Restaurant Louis, and purveyor of Japanese wild meats, chef Susumu Shimizu of Restaurant Anis. He also did a brief stint at three-Michelin-starred L'Effervescence with chef-owner Shinobu Namae.

Helou used each of his experiences as building blocks to inform the way he would be as a chef of his own restaurant. In the French kitchens, he refined his French cooking techniques and learnt the nuances of combining flavours. In the Japanese open kitchens, he formed a professional persona when working in front of guests. "The only consistent things I learnt from all these chefs were discipline, perfection and to be uncompromising in quality," he says—qualities not too dissimilar to what is required to get a purple belt in jiu-jitsu, which he also has.

Missing home, he returned to Singapore at the beginning of 2019 eager to join the diverse and formidable assembly of fine dining chefs here. His first step: open Division Supper Club to experiment and find a cuisine that best represents him. Without the pressures of committing to a permanent space and staff, he could put what he learnt into practice and get insight into local diners' preferences after having been away for so long. The challenge of operating without a proper kitchen space also meant he had to learn how to be more resourceful.

After eight months of doing the pop-up, Helou was ready to open Fleurette in 2020, armed with a philosophy he could call his own: a "less is more" attitude focusing on showcasing the quality of the ingredients with advanced cooking techniques. No matter that Covid-19 was rearing its ugly head as the rest of the world was brought to a halt by the middle of that year; Helou had set his mind to it.

On top of the "circuit breaker" and dining curfew that F&B businesses had to contend with, small restaurants such as the 16-seater Fleurette had it especially hard with the two-person dine-in rule. The restaurant was only able to fit 10 people every service and came up with takeaway options such as boxes of its signature madeleines and a Japanese curry special. And thanks to the subsidies provided by the government and a small team, Helou was able to emerge unscathed while ensuring that everyone was paid their full salaries throughout.

Still, his unique marriage of Japanese and Singaporean flavours prepared impeccably with French

Tariq Helou

GROOMING, HAIR AND MAKE-UP ANGEL GWEE USING DAVINES AND DIOR BEAUTY

techniques kept diners coming back. While his tasting menus are styled after the kaiseki culinary art form, complete with a donabe course at the end, he prefers to show restraint when it comes to presentation to "produce simple dishes that are complex in flavour". Courses such as the deceptively simple chawanmushi with langoustine from Mozambique, or the white asparagus from Provence with yuzu "sabayon" allow the ingredients to shine without unnecessary embellishments.

For now, his cuisine leans heavily towards his two major influences from his years of training—French and Japanese—but Helou wants to rediscover his Lebanese heritage to add to his repertoire. He is also constantly on the lookout for new ingredients to play with, such as the different types of asparagus as the season turns to summer and European seasonal fruits, which he hopes to add more of to the menu.

As he continues to grow as a chef and Fleurette evolves along with him, one thing is for sure: you will be made to feel welcomed and leave satisfied. To Helou, one of the most important things he has learnt from three years of running his own fine dining restaurant is that the experience is enjoyable for not just guests but his team as well.

And while the sky is the limit, he has not forgotten to stop and smell the roses along the way. He says with gratitude: "Some nights when the restaurant is full of happy guests and the space is buzzing, I still get quite emotional and feel very fortunate."

KEVIN WONG

CHEF-OWNER, SEROJA

In 2009, when Kevin Wong was a bright-eyed 15-year-old cook working at a kampong in Nilai in the state of Negeri Sembilan in Malaysia, he met the late Anthony Bourdain, who was in Malaysia to film the TV series *Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations*. He told Bourdain about his plans to fly to France and work in three-Michelin-starred restaurants, hoping to get some encouragement from the famous chef-personality. Instead, he got a response he did not want to hear: do not go to France, and keep cooking Malaysian cuisine because it is something special.

Not fully understanding the piece of advice, Wong went ahead to France anyway, without knowing a word of French, as a student at Taylor's Culinary Institute. Taking his education partially in Malaysia and then in Toulouse, France, he snagged an opportunity to train with Franck Putelat at his two-Michelin-starred restaurant La Table de Franck Putelat in Carcassonne after graduation.

Although his tasks in the kitchen as a dishwasher and the back-breaking 16 or more hours of working were not exactly what he envisioned, his time there taught him discipline and teamwork. "No matter how talented the chef is, if he doesn't have command of the brigade, respect of the producers and the trust of the diners, he won't have a good restaurant," he says.

More than a year later (and sorely missing home), he moved to San Francisco to work at Benu, the three-Michelin-starred institution serving Californian cuisine with Korean and Cantonese influences. A "more humane" work climate compared to the strict French kitchens, it was here that he met a Korean American sous chef who impressed Wong with his culinary skills and advised him not to take the same path he did, to avoid a hard life of working long hours without good remuneration. This time, Wong listened.

Aware that he was lacking in other aspects, such as a cuisine he could call his own even after four years in the US and working at another three-Michelin-starred restaurant called Coi, he moved somewhere closer to home: Singapore. Here, he joined Andrew Walsh, chef-owner of Cure Concepts, for two years, opening a few restaurants with the group. Then, he found the role of junior sous chef at one-Michelin-starred Meta, helmed by chef-owner Sun Kim. In the five years at Meta, he worked his way up to head chef and guided it through Covid-19 restrictions, offering lunch sets, taking on marketing duties by doing photography and social media management, and negotiating a delivery arrangement with taxi drivers.

Discovering his style of cuisine came later when, still at Meta, he took part in the 2021 S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy global competition and won third place in the World Finals. Pushed to create a dish that best represented him, he came up with Celebration of a Duck: a dish that was inspired by hawkers and saw the bird prepared four ways, and the predecessor of the cuisine he now calls Malay Archipelago, which he serves at his own restaurant, Seroja.

The approval from the jurors, internationally renowned chefs such as the amicable Mauro Colagreco of three-Michelin-starred Mirazur, gave him a boost of confidence and the validation to finally open his own restaurant serving a cuisine close to his heart. Inspired by the numerous similarities and yet salient differences between Malaysia and Singapore, it is a celebration of a "melting pot of cultures" and an homage to his heritage.

Now at eight months old, Seroja is paving the way as a champion of local and regional producers, from using mangrove wood from Java to native Malaysian vegetables such as fiddlehead ferns, *kulim* (a nut from northern Malaysia) and jungle honey that tastes like *luo han guo*, or monk fruit. He had to personally source for some of the items, building his own supply chains and relationships with fishermen in Klang and farmers from the Lun Bawang tribe in Sarawak. Even the restaurant's rainforest soundtrack is curated by the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra.

Worried by the collective amnesia of a shared history and culture that feels so personal, Wong has started obsessively documenting what he has found in his research. "When we go to the jungles, we have a film crew with us," he shares. He is in talks with scientists, organic farmers and other like-minded folks such as food historian Khir Johari, the author of *The Food of Singapore Malays*.

Not content with just documentation, he intends to pay it forward by eventually building a foundation or using Seroja as an educational platform and stepping stone for younger chefs. "Education has become more of a business than educating people [and] I think that's a major problem in moving our industry forward," he says. It is clear that at 29 years old, Wong has finally found his calling: to uplift Southeast Asians in the industry, whether it is by giving them an opportunity to be showcased or doing his part to revise an outdated culinary curriculum to give the next generations equal standing in the international playing field.

Lofty ambitions aside, Wong's biggest milestone so far has nothing to do with who he has met or cooked for; he proudly recounts treating his family to a holiday in Bali, a gesture of extravagance for a child raised by a fisherman dad in Klang. After 14 years of seeing what the world has to offer abroad, he discovered what really matters: family and heritage. Recalling what Bourdain once told him when he was still a greenhorn, he quips with a chuckle: "Somehow, I've come full circle."

SOH HUI SHAN

CHEF-PARTNER, CATKIN BY HUISHAN

In a bold move to make what is typically the sweet end of a meal stand on its own as a three-course omakase dessert menu, Soh Hui Shan embarked on her solo venture, Catkin by Huishan, last December. It is named after the flower of the willow tree, a nod to her previous role as head pastry chef at the genre-defying restaurant led by Nicholas Tam, where she found recognition for her immaculately plated local-inspired creations.

Reminiscent of the snacks she had growing up, the 27-year-old's desserts are hyperlocal, riffing off her memories of hawthorn candy, kueh tutu, ondeh ondeh and *gua zi* (meaning "melon seeds" in Mandarin). Her light-handed and precise execution, which won critics over at Willow, is still put on full display for five days a week at the decidedly less formal concept where she is chef-partner.

Catkin is not what you would expect from a commercial dessert bar. With Soh running the day-to-day operations alone (she gets some help from Cynthia Lim of Twenty Eight Cafe, of which Catkin shares the space with, and Benjamin Goh of the one-Michelin-starred restaurant 28 Wilkie, but for the most part, she is on her own), the ambience is personal and intimate, much like her inspiration, Dej Kewkacha's Kyo Bar, a kaiseki-style dessert bar in Bangkok. She is also responsible for marketing the place on social media platforms, a skill she had to learn on her own. "I had zero experience managing socials or creating content. The learning curve was definitely a steep one," she shares.

Learning marketing skills might be a departure from the duties of a restaurant chef, but in hindsight, Soh's unconventional career path would have instilled such gumption in the young chef. Drawn to the subject Food and Nutrition in school, she taught herself how to bake from watching YouTube videos at 13. Paying heed to the fire burning in her belly, she enrolled in a Diploma in Pastry & Bakery course at the At-Sunrice GlobalChef Academy, where she dreamed about decorating cakes in hotels. It was not until her first school assignment at the now-defunct The White Rabbit that she fell in love with the adrenaline of service.

After graduating, she emailed asking for a job at Restaurant André, a beloved two-Michelin-starred fine dining restaurant run by Taiwanese-born chef André Chiang that shut its doors in 2018. Going up against another applicant, she impressed then-head pastry chef Mohamed Al-Matin by doing a few tasks such as the menial exercise of separating cooked rice grains to dry before they are fried to make puffed rice.

In the little more than a year at Restaurant André, she found her mentors in both Chiang and Matin, who taught her the value of discipline, time management and hard work. "Though they were extremely strict and harsh when it came to results, they put in the time to teach me the knowledge and practices I still use today," she shares.

Crediting both chefs as people who have shaped the formative years in her career, she recounts the intense experience of being a part of the kitchen brigade. Apart from the absolute top standard that was expected of her, she remembers staying back after service till 4 am, practising her knife skills, and sometimes spending nights at the restaurant.

She fondly recalls one of the highlights of working at Restaurant André, where she followed Chiang to Taipei for the Golden Horse Awards Gala and broke down after learning that she had to use an ice cream machine she never used before. "I felt like a huge disappointment, but he took time off from his mountain of work to teach me patiently, step by step, how to operate it. I was so touched."

When the restaurant finally closed, she joined the opening team for Restaurant Zén by renowned Swedish chef Björn Frantzén. There, she worked with executive chef Marcus Jernmark, who was tasked to help with the opening and shared his extensive knowledge of gastronomy. She learnt sophisticated recipes that were honed through years of R & D, nothing like what was taught at pastry school.

Two years later and ready for change, she left the fine dining kitchen to join former mentor Matin at his independent venture, Le Matin Patisserie, and got her first taste of high-volume production at its previous outlets at Raeburn Park and in Paragon. It has since closed both spaces and moved to Ion Orchard.

i Shan
ry Chef

Although having learnt a new set of skills at the patisserie, Soh found herself missing the rush of working in a fine dining restaurant; life as a junior sous chef at Le Matin Patisserie felt mundane and repetitive. When she got the offer from Tam, also a Restaurant Zén alumni, to be head pastry chef at Willow, she jumped at it.

Now, she is ready for the next stage of her career—adding business owner to her resume. Emboldened by the great response from guests at Willow, she wants to make her creations more accessible to the masses. It helps that the local street snacks she is inspired by are not made with premium ingredients to begin with, allowing her to keep prices reasonable. Instead, she utilises her skills acquired from fine dining institutions to elevate unassuming snacks such as her favourite kueh tutu, transformed into an all-white cloud of rice foam topped with a quenelle of white pandan gelato over a base of desiccated coconut glazed with gula melaka.

Speaking of, Catkin recently launched its line of gelato in uncommon flavours that range from *pisang rastali*, the stumpy breed of bananas used to make goreng pisang, to *gua zi*, made from sunflower, pumpkin and melon seeds. Perhaps somewhere in the pipeline will be her first savoury dessert with caviar. She says with optimism: “It’s time to showcase my adaptability as a pastry chef and conquer a whole new dimension of flavours.”

Time, Reimagined

Alfred Chua, the managing director of The Wok People, ruminates on his life's milestones as well as his love for luxury timepieces and aged single malts

For rare whiskies such as those in the Glenfiddich Time Re:Imagined collection decades are poured into the creation of the fine golden liquid. Time itself is a crucial ingredient in the exclusive collection, which comprises remarkable 30-, 40- and 50-year-old single malt whiskies of exceptional richness and character that is the height of Glenfiddich's signature distillery style.

These prized aged whiskies are the cumulative fruits of generational wisdom and experience. Since the 1960s, precious casks of Scotch have been patiently tended to by the whisky maker's dedicated Malt Masters as they mature. Brian Kinsman, Glenfiddich's current long-serving Malt Master, explains that "each cask, each bottle, is absolutely unique because of the time it has spent maturing. Both nature and time play huge roles in making whisky taste like it does and the Time Re:Imagined collection pays homage to this process and the exquisite liquid it helps to create."

The Time Re:Imagined bottles are housed in bespoke artwork casings by computational designer Manuel Jiménez García, who articulated the passage of time through avant-garde sculptural forms. The Glenfiddich 30 Year Old Suspended Time, for example, embodies its titular concept by seemingly floating in its case, whereas the jesmonite case in which the Glenfiddich 40 Year Old Cumulative Time sits features bold grooves that expose the marbling within, evoking geological metamorphosis.

Entrepreneur, whisky lover and luxury watch collector Alfred Chua has both in his home's private whisky bar, and his eye now lingers on the alluring Glenfiddich 50 Year Old Simultaneous Time. Ensconced in William Grant & Sons' Distillers Library, the invite-only space housing the award-winning distiller's ultra-rare and collectible whiskies, he considers the three expressions in the Time Re:Imagined collection and the different facets of time each captures. Drawing a parallel to haute horology, his other passion, he shares that what he looks for in luxury timepieces changes with the passing of time, much like how age alters the character of whiskies. "We establish goals, but perspectives change, goals change," he muses. "Every young man aspires to a Rolex—it was the first watch I myself aspired to own and I acquired a second-hand one after my first two pay cheques—but through the years, I learnt more about watches and realised that the watchmaking history of the company is very important. The movement is important, but at the end of the day, it's how [the brand] appeals to me. AP (Audemars Piguet) appeals to me. You want the experiences that follow the watch, and AP is very into hospitality and events. In fact, I've been to the factory twice. The distinctive octagonal shape of the Royal Oak—the first timepiece I got after I really started getting into watches in 2005, when I sold my business—appeals to me. The Royal Oak Offshore is classic and sporty; it's quite versatile."

Chewing over the concept of suspended time, as encapsulated by the Glenfiddich 30 Year Old, Chua brings up his and his wife's 10th year anniversary, and the pair of rose gold Patek Philippe men's and ladies' watches he bought to commemorate the special occasion. "Unlike the whisky, [they'll] always be with us," he quips with a chuckle.

Mulling on the Glenfiddich 40 Year Old, representative of cumulative time, Chua likens the whisky, which has rich layers of

PHOTOGRAPHY **DARREN GABRIEL LEOW** STYLING **ADRIEL CHIUN**
GROOMING **ANGEL GWEE USING CHANEL BEAUTY**

flavours courtesy of the remnant vatting process Glenfiddich pioneered, to "a journey of my work, my career". He expounds: "I stayed in a rented house and my mum had to work three jobs to get me through school. I finished only my polytechnic [education] because continuing would've put a lot of pressure on her. So I got my diploma and went on to do many jobs." He shilled boxes of Versace and Police sunglasses to optical shops, sold container space as well as carpets, and even worked as a door-to-door salesman. In 1998, he ventured into F&B and, despite his engineering diploma and lack of experience, built a successful business that he sold to a Danish company. In 2009, he founded The Wok People, which netted him the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 2014. "It ended up being a really big milestone," he says. "It changed my life because once [I won that], bankers, investors and government agencies [came to me]. It was a really big change. Sometimes, I [still] can't believe it, because it's just so much for someone who was just trying to make ends meet with a small business."

And what of the Glenfiddich 50 Year Old Simultaneous Time? The rarest expression in the series with only 220 bottles worldwide, the highly sought-after collector's item is a blend of whiskies from three different American oak refill casks, all matured in the same warehouse before being married and finished in an American oak refill cask for two years. Chua ponders for a moment. "I feel it's [reflective] of starting my family and my business career, taking stock of what I'm happy with and looking forward to the next chapter," he says. "I'm 47. My kids are young, so what's next for me, especially now that I've sold my company? How can I create a legacy? I thought whisky and watches are quite symbolic, because I also want what I've built to last."

Find out more about the Glenfiddich Time Re:Imagined collection at since1887.sg.

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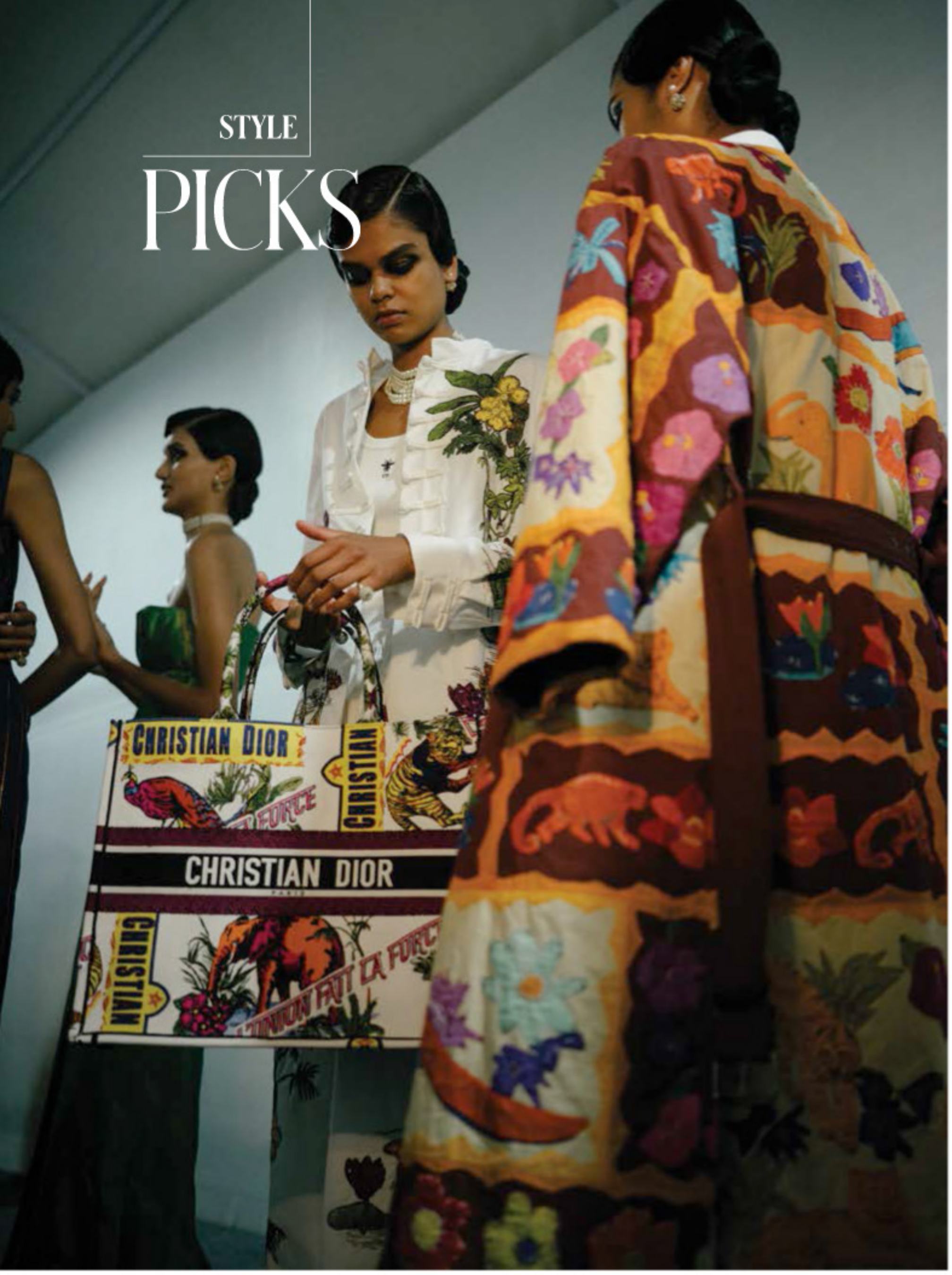
From left: Designer Kit Wan; **Chanel** dress; **Philosophy di Lorenzo Serafini** shoes

Tatler
TYLE

Shoemaker Giuseppe Zanotti wants to be more Zen, the innovative Kit Wan believes fashion design should be limitless, and gender-neutral jewellery is here to stay

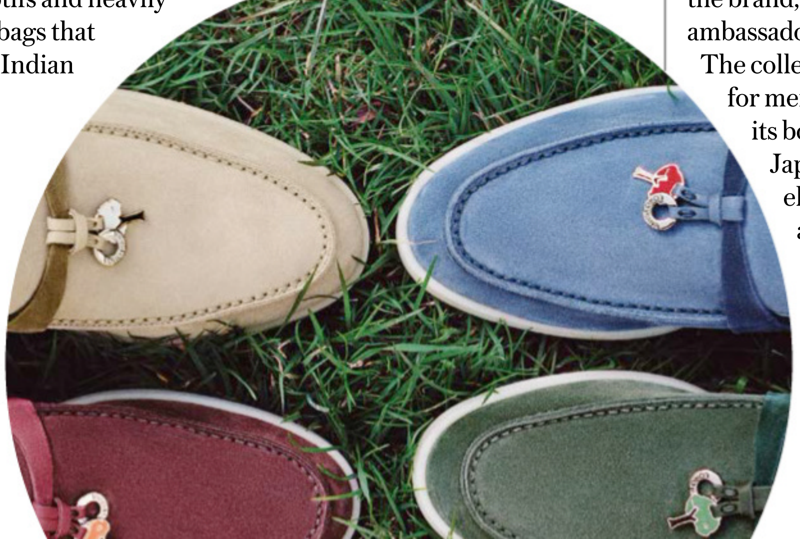
PHOTOGRAPHY OLIVIER YOAN (FASHION SHOOT)

PICKS



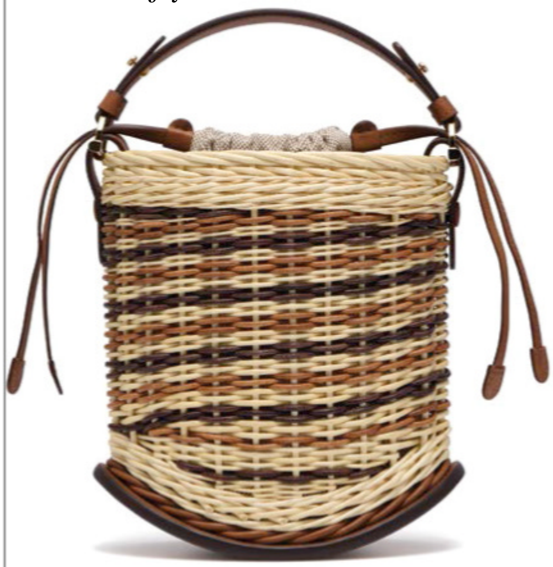
A SPECTACLE

The Dior Fall 2023 collection, presented in Mumbai against the landmark Gateway of India monument, was one for the books. India is known for its intricate handicrafts and long-standing role in manufacturing European high fashion, and that artisanship was front and foremost throughout the collection. Maria Grazia Chiuri worked closely with Karishma Swali, director of Mumbai's Chanakya Atelier and the Chanakya School of Craft, to create 99 looks that celebrate embroidery, Madras check and Benarasi brocade fabrics, mirror work, Nehru collars and kurta tailoring, as well as the revisited toile de Jouy in an India-inspired colour palette. *Tatler's* top picks include silk blouses and dresses with decorative motifs and heavily embroidered handbags that carry the wealth of Indian savoir-faire.



SEASONAL BREEZE

While style should be timeless, there is such a thing as a perfect summer bag. Delvaux interprets its signature Pin Mini Bucket silhouette via the rarefied tradition of Osier basket-weaving. Extending its love for artisanship and heritage, the Belgian maison chose to work with world-renowned master *vannière*, or basket-weaver, Catherine Romand and her atelier in the Loire Valley, elevating their centuries-old craft crafting osier, a superior willow grown in the region, into the exclusive bucket style. Each bag takes nine hours of meticulous work, resulting in a silhouette that exudes summer charm, nature and joy.



SUMMER LANDING

Loro Piana has delivered a summer treat in the form of a collaboration with Korean actor Hyun Bin. The *Crash Landing On You* star and the Italian brand chose the beech tree as a motif, which appears embroidered on hats and as a charm on the famous White Sole shoes. "This project was born from the love for nature and outdoor life that I share with the brand," the actor, who became a brand ambassador in 2021, said in a statement.

The collection, which features accessories for men and women, is now available in its boutiques in Hong Kong, China, Japan, Korea, Singapore and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, as well as on the website. As a part of the collaboration, Loro Piana also donates to Unicef programmes that raise awareness of the impact climate change has on children's lives.

IMAGES PRERNA NAINWAL (DIOR); KEITH TSUJI/GETTY IMAGES (PRADA FRAMES)

Viti Levu, Fiji, July 2017. Courtesy NTU CCA Singapore.

MEETING OF MINDS

Fashion has proven its power as a language that transcends categorisation and connects disparate communities. Prada Frames, a multidisciplinary symposium exploring the complex and nuanced relationship between design, art and the environment, is a great example of this power. After the success of the 2022 edition, this year's edition debuted at M+ museum in Hong Kong in March, followed by a three-day event in Teatro Filodrammatici in Milan. Themed Materials in Flux, the 2023 symposium gathered artists, scholars and professionals from various fields to explore the potential for original creativity and opportunities for low-impact production and circulation.

SMALL TALK

Stepping in Tune

From scooping gelato to DJing at a local radio station in rural Italy to designing shoes for the likes of Beyoncé and Rihanna, Giuseppe Zanotti's life has been anything but ordinary. We caught up with the designer on his first visit to Asia post-Covid to talk muses and music

By Coco Marett

"I was a loser DJ," Giuseppe Zanotti tells *Tatler* as we sit down to chat in the Presidential Suite at Fullerton Bay Hotel in Singapore. He's sat in a lounge chair, wearing his signature black, thick-framed glasses.

Before becoming one of the world's most celebrated shoe designers, Zanotti started his career as a DJ for an independent radio station in his hometown in Italy, essentially working for free because he would "spend all [his] money buying records".

Zanotti grew up in San Mauro Pascoli, a coastal town one hour south of Bologna that's known for shoe manufacturing. "It's a beautiful summer place," he says. His family owned a quaint restaurant and gelateria on the beach, where he would work during the peak season. "My father and mother had already written my destiny for me and my siblings—but this destiny felt too strange for me."

Zanotti says he always had a penchant for design—whether that was sketching cars and bikes, or designing out-there ice cream cones for the family business—so after he left his career in radio, he began working for a local shoe company.

"Since I was a kid, I was amazed by people who work with their hands, the artisans," he says. "I learnt everything, all the technical components ... leather, the inside and outside, lining and upper, accessories and embroideries like jewels, stones, crystals. Shoes are a whole universe."

After cutting his teeth, he began designing shoes freelance for brands such as Gianfranco Ferré and Valentino. "At the time, I didn't have the self-confidence to put my name on my shoes," he says. "They were just shoes with no name."

In 1994, he finally launched his eponymous brand and showed his first collection in New York. "This year is 20 years for my brand," he

IMAGES MATTIA ZOPPELLARO (PORTRAIT); DAVIDE FARABEGOLI (DRAWING KIT)

muses. “We had nine employees in the beginning; now we have 500.”

Despite Zanotti’s pivot from radio to runway, music has remained a constant in the designer’s life. One of his first designs was a slouch boot, inspired by Janis Joplin—a style that remains a signature in his repertoire today. “She was the first example of Coachella style: bohemian, free,” he says as he quickly but concisely sketches out the boot on a sketchpad in front of him. “But not free as in empty; free and cultured—like The Velvet Underground or Jimi Hendrix. All these artists and musicians were so important in my upbringing.”

He even has a specific playlist he listens to when he’s in need of a dose of inspiration. Titled Playlist Senza Titolo—or “playlist without a title”—it’s an eclectic collection of songs that Zanotti says brings out “great emotion”. He excitedly connects his phone to the speaker in his hotel room to play us some of his favourites, which include *Resonance* by Japanese classical composer Akira Kosemura, *Cold Little Heart* by British folk rock artist Michael Kiwanuka, and *All of the Lights* by Kanye West and Rihanna, both of whom he has worked with extensively—who can forget RiRi’s custom-made thigh-high Giuseppe Zanotti boots for her 2016 Anti Tour, which took almost three months for the designer and his team to make?

On the surface, it might seem like these songs have little to nothing in common, but the thread that connects them is the quality of production and the emotion behind them. It’s something of a metaphor for Zanotti’s shoes. “When you do something you love, you feel a [sense of] satisfaction and emotion. You need to follow this emotion,” he says. “Sometimes I listen to this playlist when I drive in the hills in Italy—I drive an electric car, so it’s silent—and it feels like I can touch heaven.”

Zanotti is all for simple pleasures these days, which is reflected in his recent and upcoming collections. “Pre-Covid, we did collection after collection. Chinese New Year, Black Friday, Cyber Monday,” he says “Any excuse to create something new. It’s a toxic situation.”

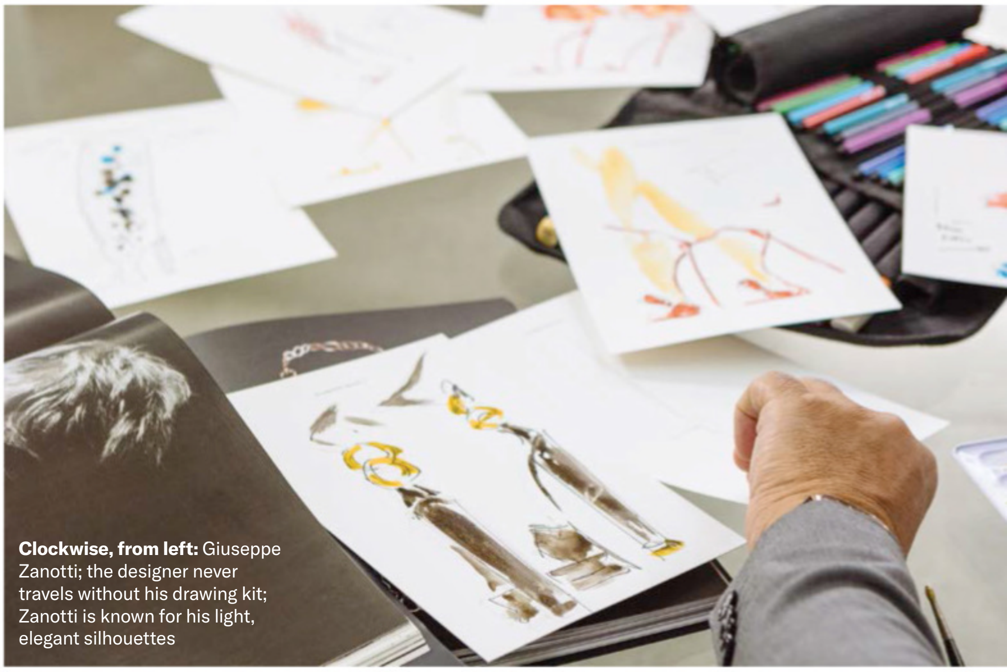
Now, he says, he wants to go back to creating shoes that are simple, beautiful, comfortable. “*Allora*,” he begins. “After these three years of slowing down, we don’t need any more fireworks. My goal is to be more concentrated, more Zen.”

The 65-year-old designer likens it to dining at a fine-dining restaurant versus a humble trattoria or, in the case of his time in Singapore, a local seafood restaurant.

“Going to a three-star Michelin restaurant can be more like an experience, a show,” he says. “But I want something real, like last night we went for chilli crab—basic, traditional but with a bit of spice. That is my goal now.”

He reaches again for his sketchpad and begins to draw the classic silhouette of a pump. “It’s the iconic symbol of femininity, sexy and sophisticated,” he says. “But the link for connecting the pump to 2023 is the use of new materials, so that past and future can come together to create something contemporary.”

After 30 years in the industry, Zanotti says he is still on a mission to find the perfect shoe. And when he does find it, he says, he knows it won’t be anything special. “The perfect shoe doesn’t have crystals or embellishments,” he says. “It’s simple and scientific. All of the elements must come together perfectly—the colour, materials, shape, proportion and fit—like a formula. Maybe we’ll find it in this life—or tonight after the second bottle of wine.”



Clockwise, from left: Giuseppe Zanotti; the designer never travels without his drawing kit; Zanotti is known for his light, elegant silhouettes

SPOTLIGHT

Kit Wan Studios

Known for crafting otherworldly garments using traditional techniques, the Hong Kong designer discusses how design can be rebellious and limitless

By Cherry Mui. Photography by Kiu Ka Yee

"People may know me because I make costumes, but I have done a lot of arts and installations," says Kit Wan. Indeed, if you had browsed the designer's social media pages in 2016 when he founded his eponymous brand, you would have only seen high-tech mechanical installations and head pieces which would look more at home in a sci-fi movie than on the runway.

Tatler visited Kit Wan Studios in Kwun Tong in March this year, two weeks after the opening of Canto-pop legend Aaron Kwok's world tour, for which Wan worked as one of the costume designers. Located in an industrial area of Hong Kong, the studio houses working tables, sewing machines and all kinds of collectibles of Astro Boy, his favourite Japanese anime character. Littered throughout the space is his archival work—from a cape reminiscent of both the galaxy and, thanks to its shredded details, melting glaciers to some metal sculptures.

Wan graduated from Hong Kong Polytechnic University with a fashion design degree, specialising in knitwear, but his path has not been a traditional fashion one. He went on to study for a master's degree at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts, and took a lot of non-fashion-related courses, including ceramics, furniture design, opera and performing arts. "It was when I studied fine arts that I realised there isn't just one methodology of approaching fashion," he says. "I went to Norway because I was frustrated with fashion design. It felt to me as though if you didn't work within the established approach, it would be difficult for you to succeed."

Wan combined all the skills he had acquired from these diverse courses to create his final-year collection; for example, he used a 3D modelling program to design a theatre set, then rendered them as prints for his garments. He saw this method as "almost like creating inspirations for myself: if I was an architect or a ceramic artist, how would I approach clothing? It gave me a lot of dynamics—I can use my different works and turn that into fashion". This remains the essence of his studio today. In late 2019, Wan became the first Asian designer to have their creations acquired by the National Museum in Oslo as part of its permanent collection. "The curator emailed me and I thought it was spam," says Wan, laughing. "For some reason, they liked my work, which is huge recognition. It proves that my vision is relevant."

Wan's theatre training and multimedia practice are in large part

Designer Kit Wan. **Opposite page, from top: Kit Wan Studios** design for music band C AllStar; Wan wears one of his headpieces

what have led to his being the go-to designer for local musicians looking for unique, memorable costumes for their stage performances. In the past three years, Wan has customised designs for singers Kwok, Hins Cheung and Janice Vidal, and girl group Collar. His research starts with listening to their songs and trying to understand their vision and the message they wish to convey. “Recording music is an intimate moment for an artist. I want to create a piece that really belongs to them and that they feel a connection to, so it will help them to perform on stage,” Wan explains. “Similar to a director, I need to know their emotions. My clothing aims to tell stories and exaggerate what the artist has to say on stage.” After talking to the performer, Wan will commemorate that intention and vibe through his design, considering every detail, including how the garment needs to move, as if it is being shot on film and every frame captured needs to be perfect.

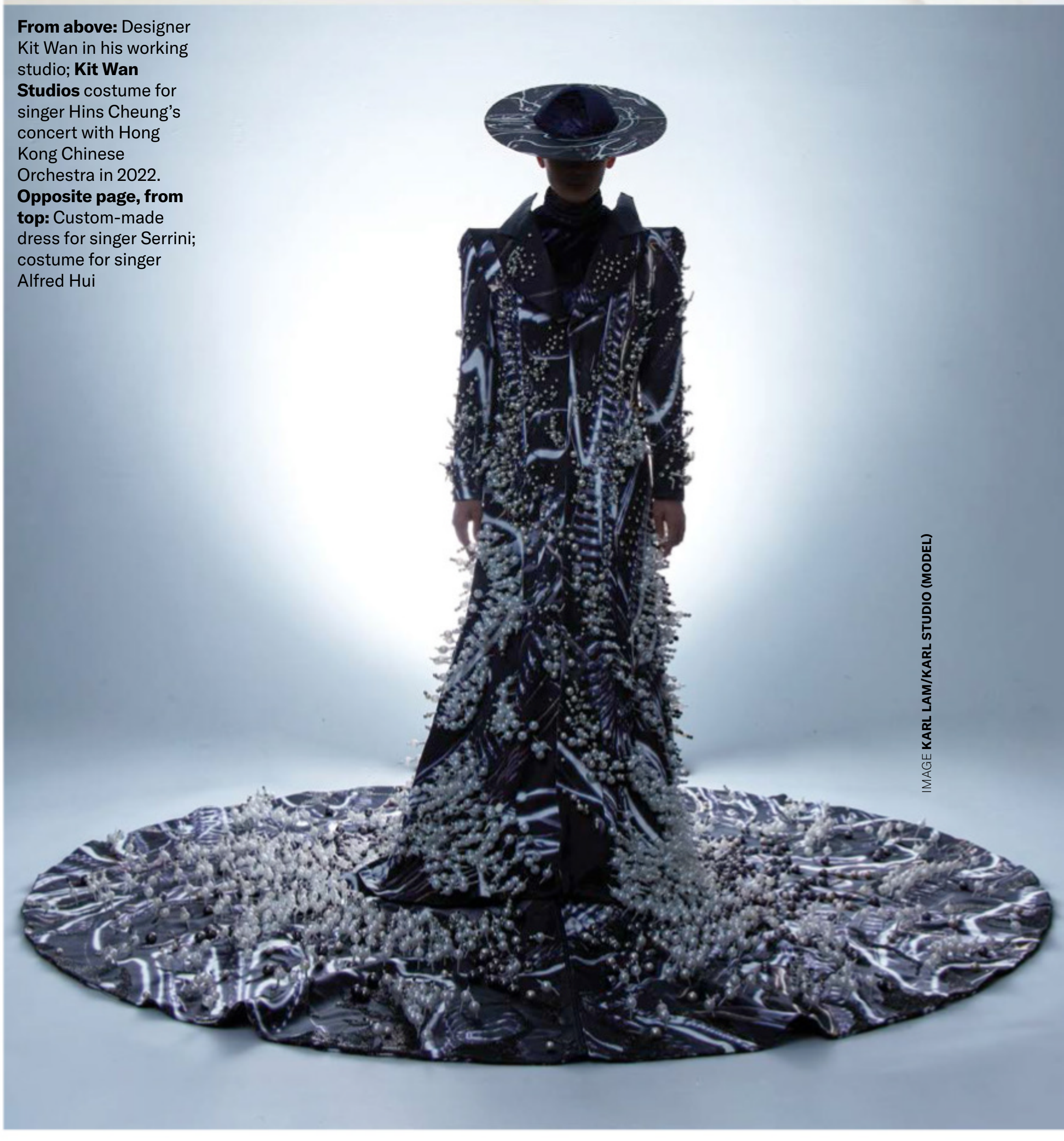
While this all sounds very philosophical, Wan’s creations rely on concrete plans and skilful execution. While he has a team of up to 10 people on each project, Wan still works on all of his designs. “You have to put your own hands on it to have an intimate relationship with your work, and I know every detail of each creation,” he says. "That way, I also know all the flaws. Often the imperfections turn out to be what makes the work better."

Wan defines his design as standing somewhere between art and fashion. "The purpose of art is to ask questions and that of design is to provide answers and solutions," says Wan. "The artistic expression of my garments is shown through the concepts and looks, but the designs are also tools that fulfil practical needs in a performance—to make artists look good and achieve visual impact."

One of the most memorable moments to date is his collaboration with Cheung. For the pop singer's 20th anniversary concert in 2022, Kit Wan Studios created a jacket made from individual panels of different shredded fabrics, each panel pleated using an antique manual smocking machine, then sewn together by hand. The fabric is built around a metallic structure to create a distorted yet effortless look. Another masterpiece he worked on for the singer is a heavily embroidered cape for the opening act at the Hins Cheung x Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra concert in 2020. Taking inspiration from the outfits worn by Chinese opera singers, nearly 10,000 pearls of different sizes were sourced and strung together in a way that created a three-dimensional silhouette.

The Kit Wan Studios aesthetic is futuristic and even robotic, and the designer cites David Bowie, Prince and Boy George among his muses. However, his approach to creativity is somewhat old-school, with an emphasis on craftsmanship. "The aim in fashion today is no longer to make things the most sophisticated way but to achieve more with less time, in the most cost-effective way." Wan refuses to follow this speed-over-quality model, instead focusing on time and craftsmanship to produce his wearable art. "I want to break the presets; I hope to stay out of them. That's why I added the human touch through crafts."

The contradictory approach can be attributed, at least in part, to



From above: Designer Kit Wan in his working studio; **Kit Wan Studios** costume for singer Hins Cheung's concert with Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra in 2022. **Opposite page, from top:** Custom-made dress for singer Serrini; costume for singer Alfred Hui

IMAGE **KARL LAM/KARL STUDIO (MODEL)**

> "I want to break the presets; I hope to stay out of them. That's why I added the human touch through crafts"

his time spent in Oslo, which was a reverse culture shock. "After being away from Hong Kong for a long time, when you look at the industry from an outsider's perspective, you realise the constraints you thought existed do not," Wan says. "Now I have that perspective and the recognition I received in Norway, I can express myself through different visual languages; it gave me the courage to be something different."

Now he's based back in his hometown, he is eager to share his approach, and assure the current generation of young Hong Kong and Asian designers that they should not feel limited by the challenges of their predecessors; geography, for example, is no longer an issue.

"I was a judge for a design graduate show," he says. "There is no longer any emphasis on regional ties—some students are on the same track as what's happening globally." This is largely because pop culture has driven fashion to be more universal. "It's not like before, when you had to work with agencies or showrooms [to gain exposure]; as long as your work is good, you can be seen and easily approached by stylists everywhere."

The real question for designers now is how to sustain that exposure and relevance for a longer period, and not be forgotten after one look or collection goes viral. Wan acknowledges that the lifespan of a creative is compressed; what a designer might have experienced over the course of a lifelong career in the pre-digital era might now happen over two or three years. "The work all goes from unexpected to expected at some point; people will get used to it," he says. "Once you reach your peak physically and creatively, you want different things. It's important to not get side-tracked in the process—you need to know what you want to preserve from the moment."

With live music performances back on track in the city, there are many more Kit Wan Studios commissioned works in the making. But don't expect the designer to limit himself to dressing singers. "I want to allocate more time to installations and art works," he says. "My focus has been on making garments for the past two years. But, like when I was in university, I now feel the urge to search for a new art form and apply it to fashion design."

Greatest Hits

Netflix's hit series *Bling Empire: New York* may have aired its last episode, but its glamorous star Lynn Ban will go on. The Singaporean designer shares more about her creative pursuits and why, just like wearing vintage fashion, being yourself will never go out of style

By Pameyla Cambe
Photography by Munster

"I'm not the shy, wallflower type," Lynn Ban says while getting her make-up done for this photo shoot. Almost anybody else would have been intimidated by the amount of black eyeliner and eyeshadow that is being meticulously applied to her face, but Ban merely asks for more.

This just about sums up the Singaporean jewellery designer's approach to glamour, which had its share of the spotlight in *Bling Empire: New York,* the spin-off series to Netflix's hit reality television show *Bling Empire.* Both offer a look inside the glitzy lives of wealthy Asian residents, in New York and Los Angeles respectively, and reveal their material indulgences, be it in the form of multimillion-dollar mansions, private jets or, in Ban's case, designer outfits.

"I think my wardrobe was its own character on the show," says Ban, laughing. Indeed, the 50-year-old could not have made her reality television debut in a more spectacular fashion. In the show's first episode, she arrives to a party dressed in a black leather dress covered in needle-thin metal spikes, an avant-garde creation from Japanese fashion label Noir Kei Ninomiya.

"That was my social-distancing dress," Ban jokes. Another spiked look from that same Noir Kei Ninomiya collection was recently worn by Icelandic musician Björk—known for making outfit choices that are as eccentric as her art—for her Coachella performance in April this year. But Ban needs no such setting to put on her extravagant displays, nor did she dial up the drama especially for her appearance in *Bling Empire: New York.* "Dressing up is my self-expression. It's not stunting," she shares. "I just think fashion is fun. Even when it comes to workout clothes, I like something that makes me and other people happy."

Ban's style philosophy manifests on her Instagram feed. In a shot

Singaporean designer and *Bling Empire: New York* star Lynn Ban gives new life to her vintage fashion pieces, including this Andy Warhol-inspired Versace gown from 1991, of which only three are available in the world

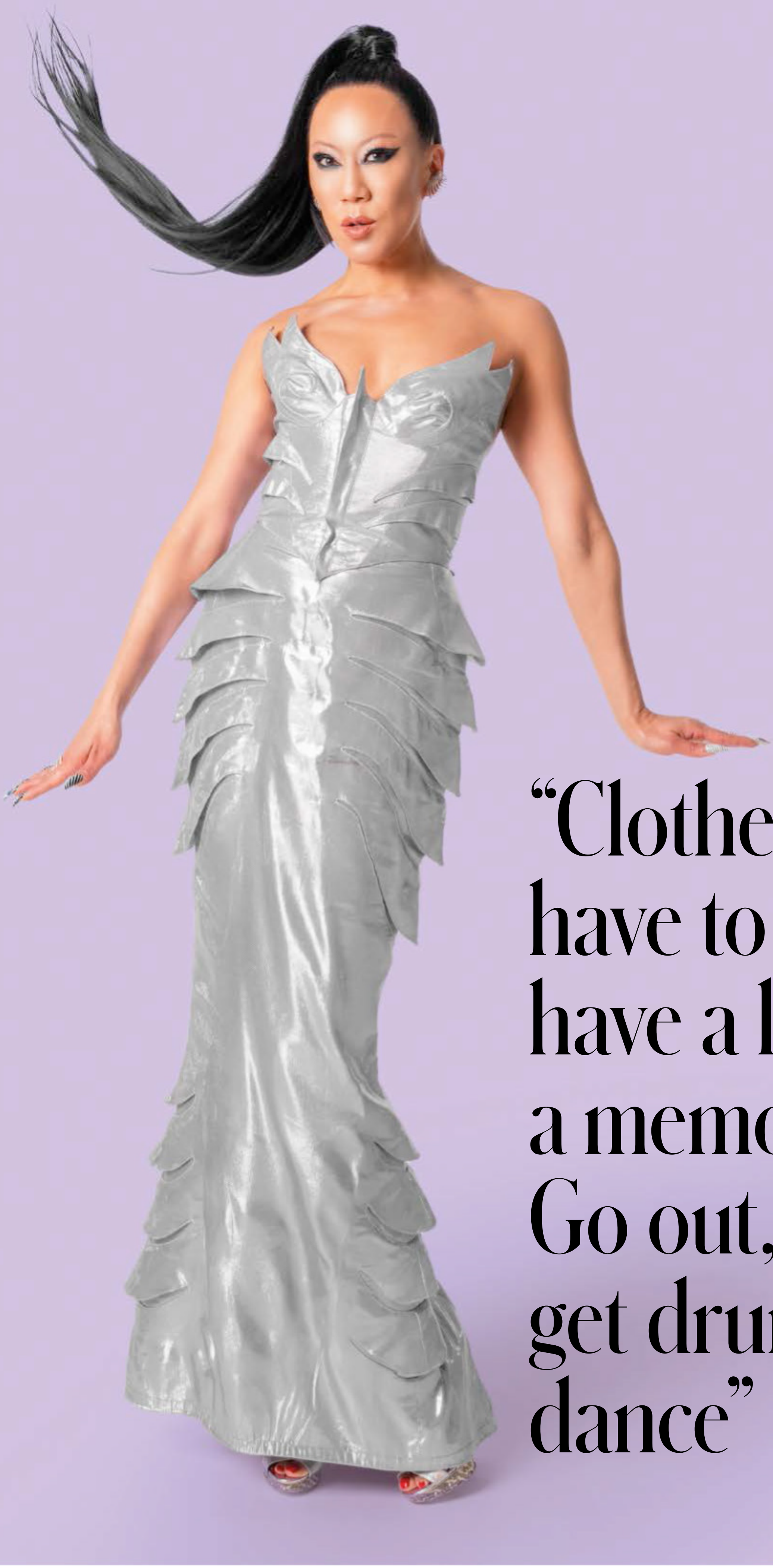
of her holidaying in Aspen, the designer's choice of skiing gear is a red puffer jacket and a polka-dot bodysuit by Jean Paul Gaultier. In another post, she struts by a swimming pool in a glittering blue Rick Owens sequinned top, worn in lieu of a swimsuit.

Ban has been playing dress up long before Instagram even existed. She certainly did not inherit her appetite for fashion from her father, David Ban, who serves as the executive director of Venus Assets, the property developer that owns Four Seasons Place Kuala Lumpur. Instead, she credits her gemmologist mother, Patricia Ban, and their shopping trips to Club 21 for exposing her to the transformative power of clothes as a child. "I was a Versace girl from when I was like 12," she says. "That sort of strong, sexy, confident woman really appeals to me."

Today, Ban still embodies the glamazon that was propagated by the fashion industry as the ideal woman in the 1990s. She is toned, tan and towers over others easily in her sky-high stiletto heels. The image is complete when she dons the famous Versace gown from the Italian fashion brand's spring-summer 1991 ready-to-wear collection.

The "Versace Warhol dress", as Ban calls it, is the stuff of fashion legend: it was designed by Gianni Versace himself, modelled by Naomi Campbell on the runway, and captured by fashion photographer Irving Penn for a campaign starring Linda Evangelista. It piques the interest of art aficionados too, given that it was inspired by pop art master Andy Warhol, and features colourful prints of Hollywood icons Marilyn Monroe and James Dean.

"There were only three of those dresses made," reveals Ban, who bought the treasured piece on eBay and with it, her membership into an ultra-exclusive club of



“Clothes have to have a life, a memory. Go out, get drunk, dance”

Ban is big on ’90s fashion: Azzedine Alaïa, Tom Ford and Thierry Mugler are among her favourite designers. Here, she flaunts a metallic, moth-inspired dress by Mugler. **Opposite page:** Her exuberant personality is captured in this vintage Mugler jacket, a design worn by supermodel Linda Evangelista for Mugler’s spring-summer 1990 ready-to-wear runway show

people who can call themselves a proud owner. "Now, it's me, the Met, and Naomi."

There are other such "grails", as collectors refer to them, to be found in Ban's closet. Her vintage fashion archive is a portal that goes as far back as the 1960s and to her, they represent more than just old clothes. "Fashion is so visual. It's about a mood, a feeling, a reference," she explains.

For this photo shoot, Ban channels a futuristic femme fatale when she puts on a sculptural, metallic dress from Thierry Mugler's spring-summer 1989 ready-to-wear collection. And she is radiant when she suits up in the Rainbow jacket from Mugler's spring-summer 1990 ready-to-wear collection.

These pieces and others from the '90s dominate Ban's archive, reflecting her obsession with a time when her favourite designers such as John Galliano, Azzedine Alaïa, Tom Ford and, of course, Versace ruled the runways. The decade was especially dazzling to Ban, who was then spending her impressionable 20s in one of the world's fashion capitals.

"Living in New York [at the time], I was fortunate that thrift stores used to be really good. You would have all these wealthy ladies from the Upper East Side donating their clothes," Ban says. "If you knew what you were looking for, then thrifting could be really fun."

It became more than fun when she started curating vintage pieces for Barneys New York in the aughts, tapping on her fashion expertise and the network of her husband Jett Kain, with whom she has been married for more than 20 years. Through his stints as a producer in the '90s—including working for MTV, creating the first VH1 Fashion and Music Awards in 1995, and even touring with Prince—Kain had access to the star-studded worlds of fashion and music, and formed connections with celebrities and fashion designers alike. (Madonna, Karl Lagerfeld and Mugler were all in attendance at the aforementioned VH1 awards.)

The two proved to be a powerful pair. In 2011, Ban launched her eponymous jewellery brand with Kain as her business partner. Her edgy designs drew some famous fans—Rihanna and Lady Gaga, to name a few—and were offered at Club 21 stores. And on *Bling Empire: New York*, she demonstrated that her creativity is as wide-ranging as her wardrobe when she debuted a resort collection in partnership with Como Hotels and Resorts. True to her own style, her resort designs are bold and glamorous, with plenty of sequinned caftans and glimmering brocade robes in jewel tones for their wearers to bring the disco anywhere they go.

"Travelling is part of my lifestyle, so it was a natural fit," Ban explains about her label's foray into ready-to-wear, which you would think would have happened sooner. She waited for the right opportunity that would allow her to produce a "more timeless" collection when the inspiration struck, instead of following fashion's fast-paced "machine of four collections a year", as she describes it. "Like I did with my jewellery, I never followed any sort of schedule. I'm like how Mr Alaïa was; he put out a new collection when he wanted," she quips.

Although Netflix cancelled the *Bling Empire* franchise this April, Ban's own empire is only set to expand. "I love designing, I love the creative process," she gushes when asked about venturing into other product categories. "I love fragrance and homeware, and I'd love to give my perspective on different product categories."

As for fans of Ban who will miss seeing her exuberant ensembles on screen, there is always Instagram. You can expect the style maven to continue to dream up exciting ways to wear her vintage pieces. "I'm not keeping them like they're too precious," she says. "Clothes have to have a life, a memory. Go out, get drunk, dance. That's what fashion is for me—you live in it."

HAIR AND MAKE-UP **GREGO USING KEUNE HAIRCOSMETICS AND MAC** PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT **JOVAN TEO**

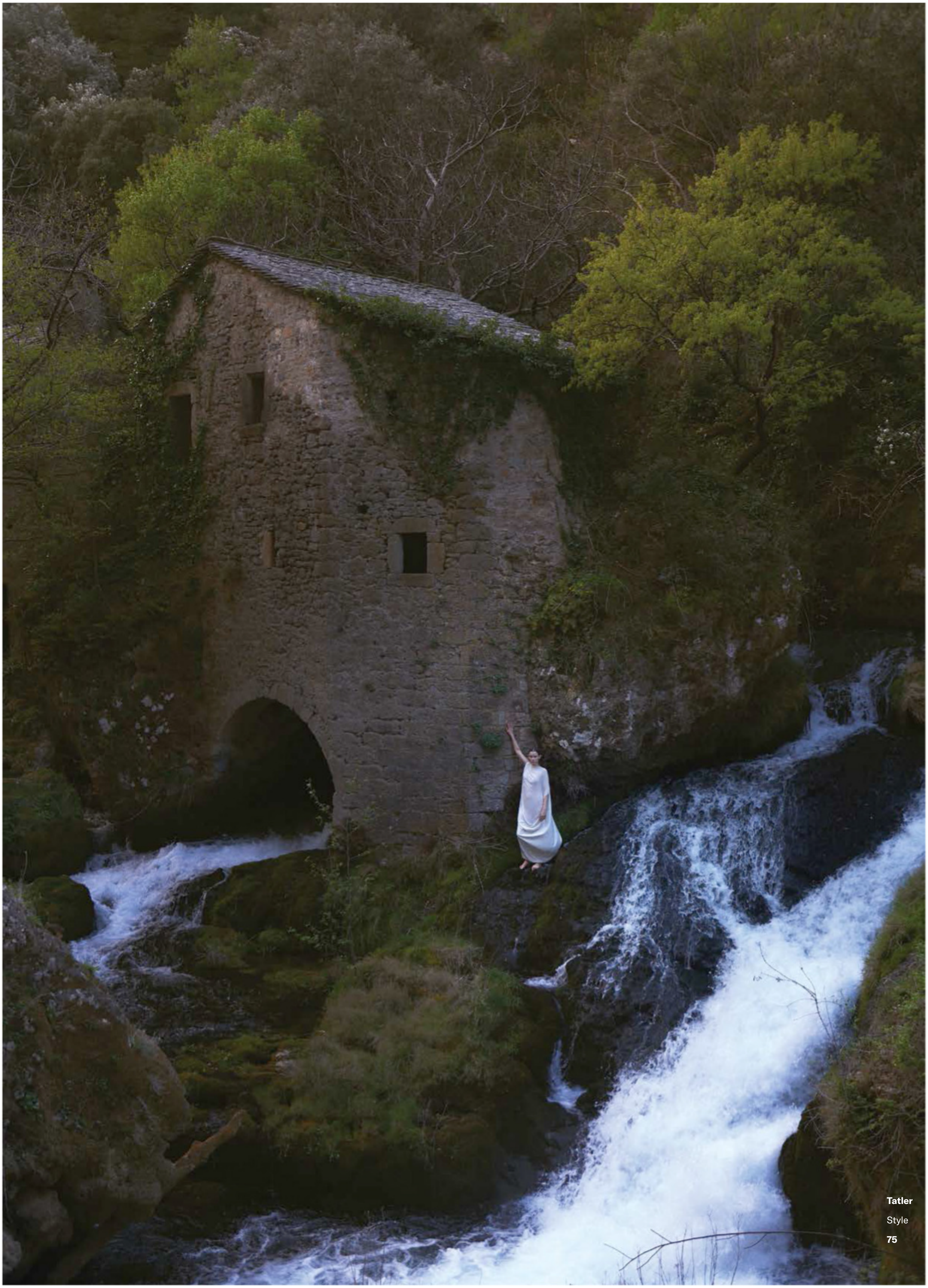
THE ENCHANTED FOREST

Embrace the effortless beauty of nature this summer with flowing fabrics, earth tones and a touch of whimsy

Photography by Olivier Yoan. Styling by Lyla Cheng

Loewe outfit

Ann Demeulemeester dress; **Jivomir Domoustchiev** choker, cuffs, belt; **Jakhu** earrings. **Opposite page: Ferragamo** dress

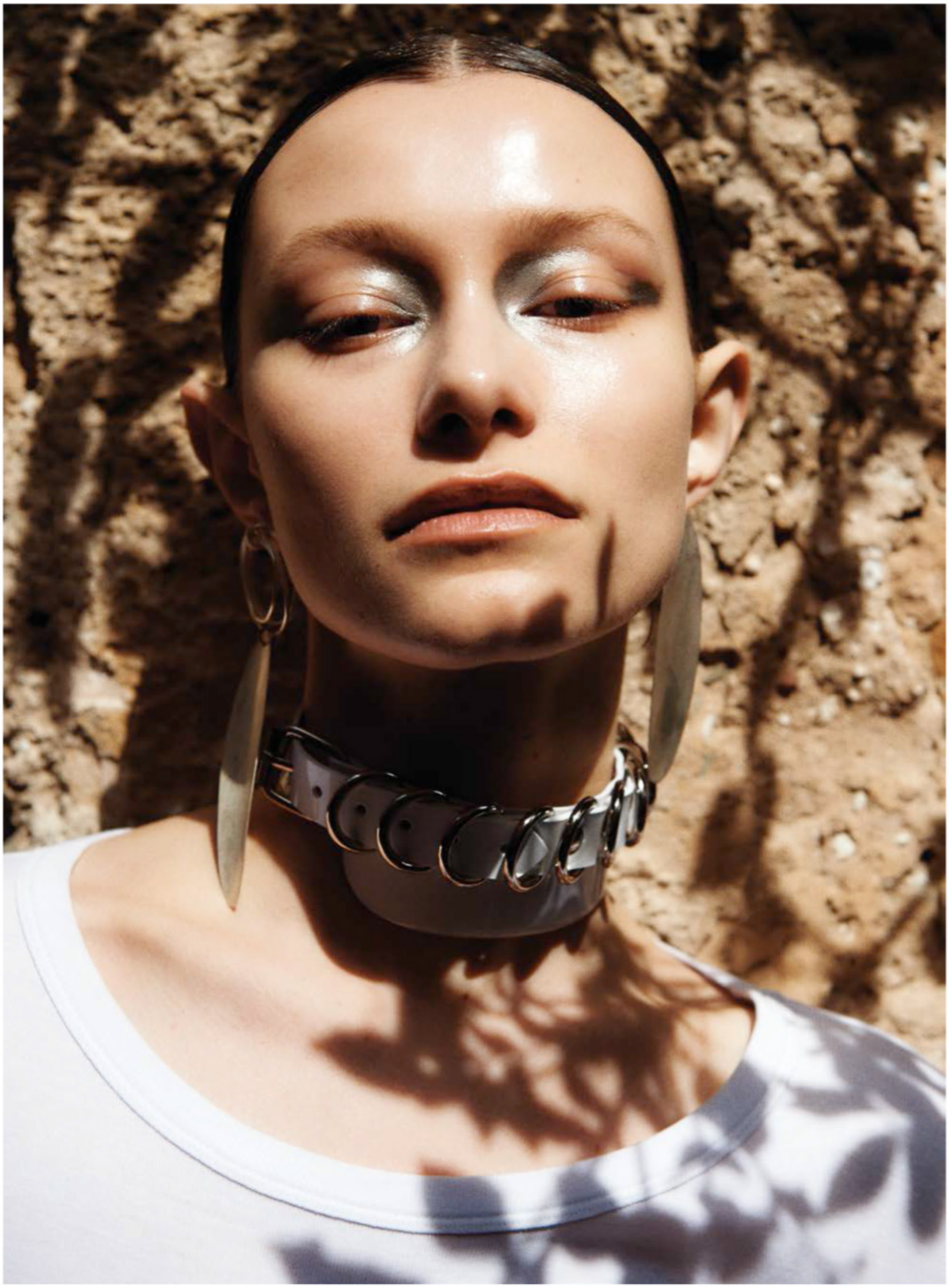


Sportmax shirt, blazer, trousers; **Jakhu** earring

Hermès top; **Fernando Jorge** earrings. **Opposite page: Chanel** outfit

Philosophy Di Lorenzo Serafini dress

HAIR AND MAKE-UP **REVE RYU** PRODUCTION **MADARA AT AALTO PRODUCTION** FASHION ASSISTANT **JOHN-MARC BOSSARD** PHOTO ASSISTANT **CHRISTIAN NAVARRO**



Ann Demeulemeester dress; **Jivomir Domoustchiev** choker; **Jakhu** earrings. **Opposite page: Christopher Kane** dress; **Hermès** sandals

1957
CHANEL
PARIS

Couture in a Bottle

Elevate your scent game with Les Exclusifs de Chanel, the quiet luxury range of fragrances meant to evoke different aspects of legendary designer Gabrielle Chanel's life *By Karen Tee*

In the world of luxury fragrances, there is infinitely more to a perfume than merely what it smells like. From evoking cherished memories to telling a story through ephemeral scent notes, a spritz is worth a thousand words—or more.

N°22
CHANEL
PARIS

Nowhere is this sophisticated ethos expressed more eloquently than in Les Exclusifs de Chanel. Much like how the revered maison creates its haute couture creations, this is a collection of perfumes crafted from the most precious and rare ingredients known to mankind.

The heritage of Les Exclusifs dates back to the 1920s, when Gabrielle Chanel—or Coco, as she was affectionately known—created a series of "secret" perfumes, together with perfumer Ernest Beaux, to be sold exclusively in her fashion boutiques. Inspired by places, numbers and atmospheres intimately linked to her life, the fragrances capture the essence of her enduring style and sophistication.

Jacques Polge, Chanel's exclusive perfume creator since 1978, continued this legacy of expressing facets of Coco's life, inspirations and personality through the Les Exclusifs de Chanel range that is sold only in Chanel Fragrance & Beauty boutiques. These olfactory creations are unique, bold, passionate and rare, and express the individuality, difference and uniqueness of each wearer. There are now 18 Les Exclusifs fragrances.

For those interested in a piece of olfactive history, take a whiff of No 22, which was created in 1922 by Beaux. Layered with a tender and powdery accord of tuberose, rose and orange blossom, this feminine scent is a light version of the iconic No 5 fragrance that he and Coco had developed a year earlier. Reminiscent of silk tweed, this sensual fragrance is an expression of a woman with a strong personality.

IMAGES **CHANEL**

Speaking of, Mademoiselle Chanel herself was proud, instinctive and daring; a woman who led her life staying true to herself and her passions. Born under the Leo zodiac sign on August 19, 1883, she fully embodied the qualities of the brave lion. Naturally, the lion became not only a personal emblem but a symbol of the house as well. The majestic feline also served as the inspiration for Le Lion de Chanel, a powerful, refined scent developed by Polge featuring leathery notes of labdanum and patchouli, and rounded out by vanilla, bergamot and lemon.

Then there is Coromandel, the Les Exclusifs fragrance that explores a design element close to Mademoiselle's heart: oriental floral-adorned lacquered Coromandel screens, which she felt created a mysterious aura and had a deep love for. The woody oriental fragrance, also created by Polge, is an enticing blend full of contrasts that starts with intense, spicy amber notes and develops richly with patchouli, frankincense and benzoin.

COROMANDEL
CHANEL
PARIS

LE LION
DE
CHANEL
PARIS

HUILE DOUCE
CORPS ET CHEVEUX
GENTLE OIL
HAIR AND BODY
CHANEL

CRÈME POUR LE CORPS
FRESH BODY CREAM
CHANEL

Clockwise, from left: The Les Exclusifs de Chanel range features 18 fragrances, including Coromandel and Le Lion de Chanel; the collection is complemented by the Gentle Oil and the Fresh Body Cream. **Opposite page:** Each Les Exclusifs de Chanel fragrance is an expression of Gabrielle Chanel's life, inspirations and personality

Another scent to try is 1957, named for the year Coco was finally feted in the US for her exceptional talent and courage in seizing opportunities and reinventing herself. This delicately luminous scent of white musk, intertwined with bergamot, iris and neroli before finishing with woody cedar and powdery accents, embodies her effervescent spirit, which has become a timeless signature of the house.

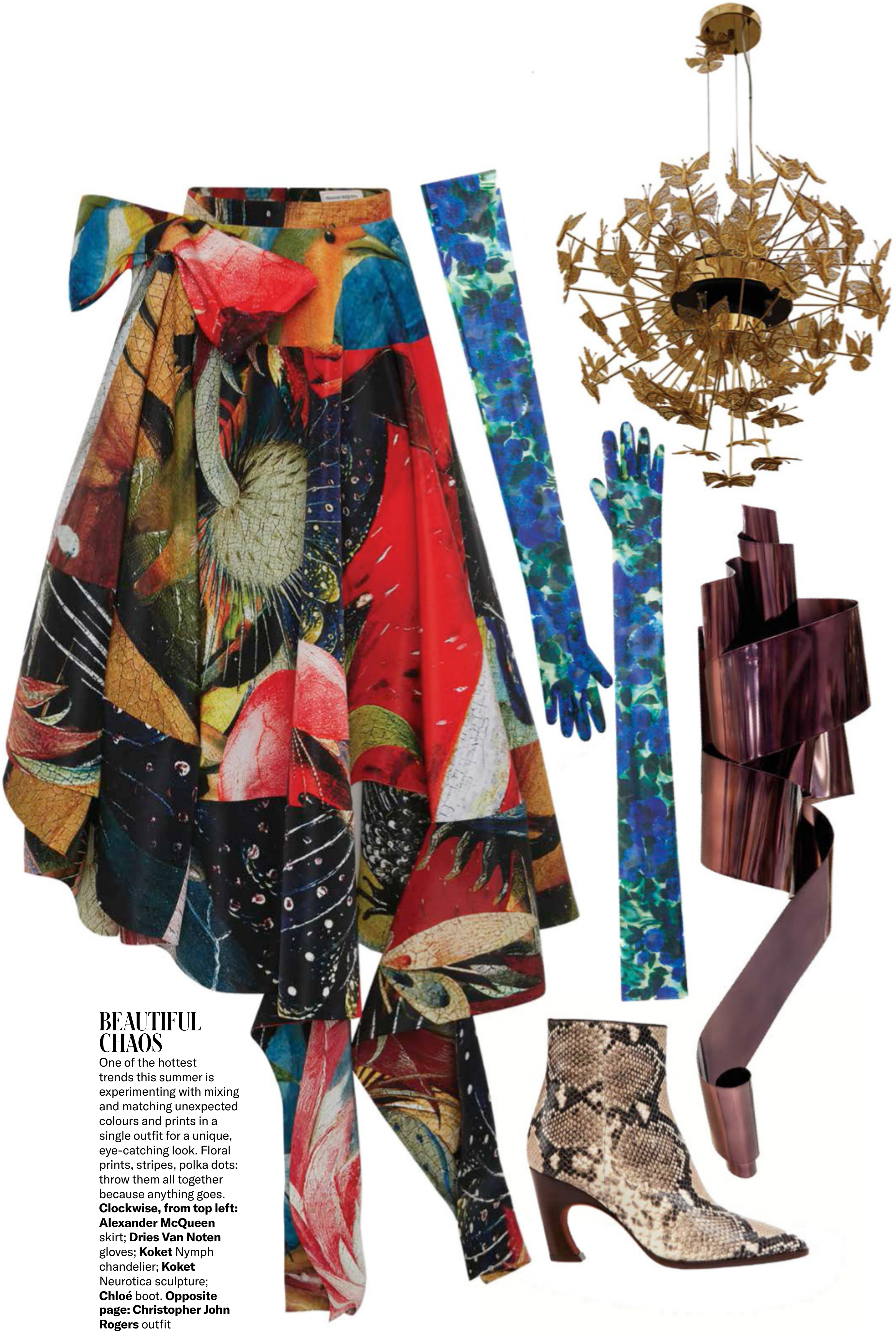
Complementing the Les Exclusifs perfume range are two scented creations: the Fresh Body Cream and the Gentle Oil. The universal Fresh Body Cream has been specially formulated with fresh-floral-musky notes designed to gently enhance and prolong its scent. With a refreshing melt-away texture, the cream nourishes and preps skin for a splash of fragrance sans sticky residue.

The Gentle Oil, meanwhile, has a richer, cocooning texture that envelops the skin and hair in a satiny veil while leaving a discreet trail of floral jasmine and powdery white musk to complement your Les Exclusifs scent of choice. Either will add to your bespoke beauty ritual to elevate the sensorial experience, just the way you like it.

THE WISH LIST

Everything you need to look your best this month

By Cherry Mui



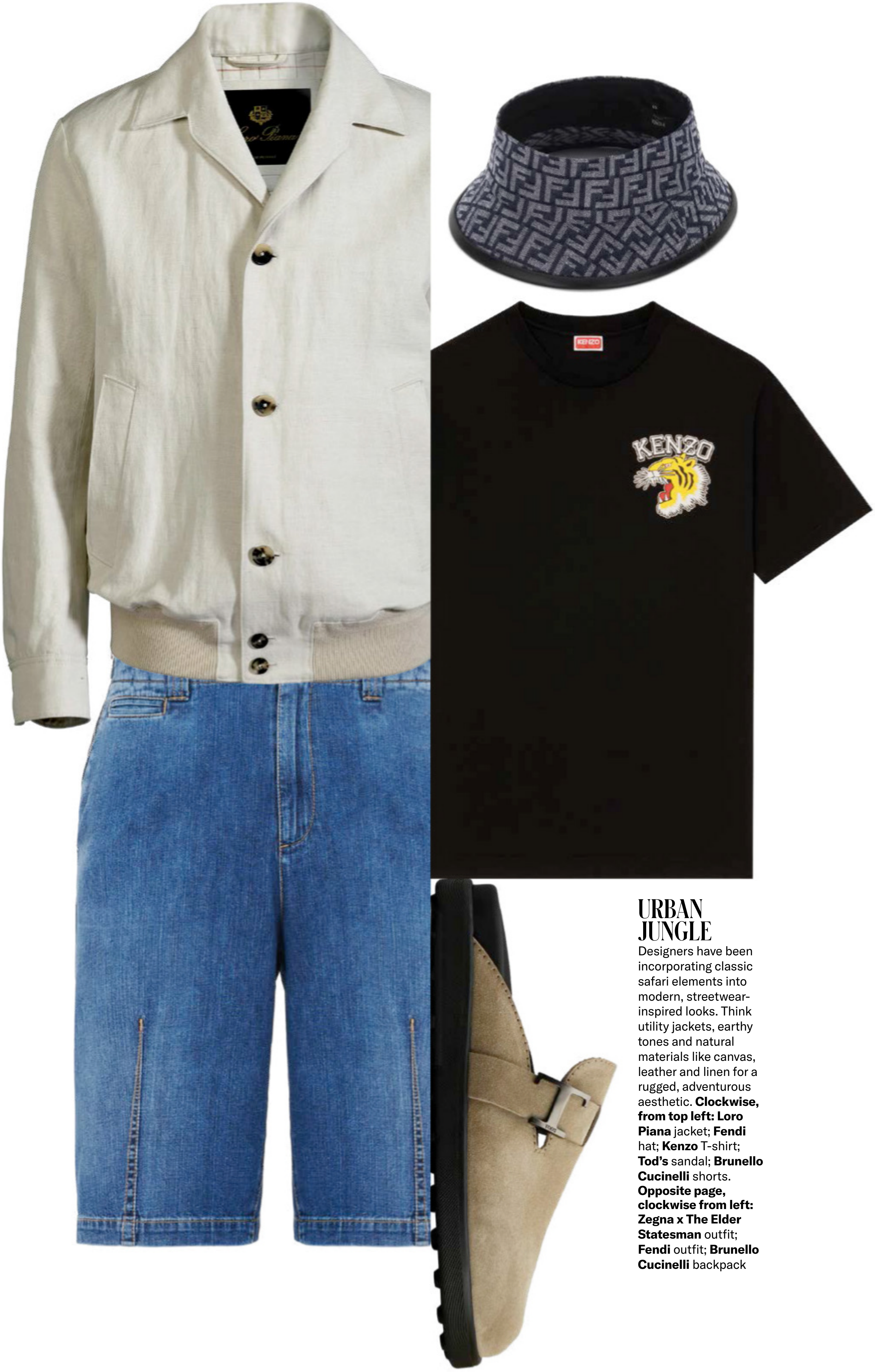
BEAUTIFUL CHAOS

One of the hottest trends this summer is experimenting with mixing and matching unexpected colours and prints in a single outfit for a unique, eye-catching look. Floral prints, stripes, polka dots: throw them all together because anything goes. **Clockwise, from top left: Alexander McQueen** skirt; **Dries Van Noten** gloves; **Koket** Nymph chandelier; **Koket** Neurotica sculpture; **Chloé** boot. **Opposite page: Christopher John Rogers** outfit

FERRAGAMO

THE LIFE OF THE PARTY

This season's party dressing trends are once again all about making a statement. From Versace's forever-glam dresses to Ferragamo's tie-dye blouses, these rave-inspired items are all you need to turn heads on the dance floor. **Clockwise, from left: Versace** outfit; **Roger Vivier** bag; **Paco Rabanne** top, earrings; **Roberto Cavalli** sandal. **Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Celine** necklace; **Ferragamo** top; **Louis Vuitton x Yayoi Kusama** sneaker; **Courrèges** pants



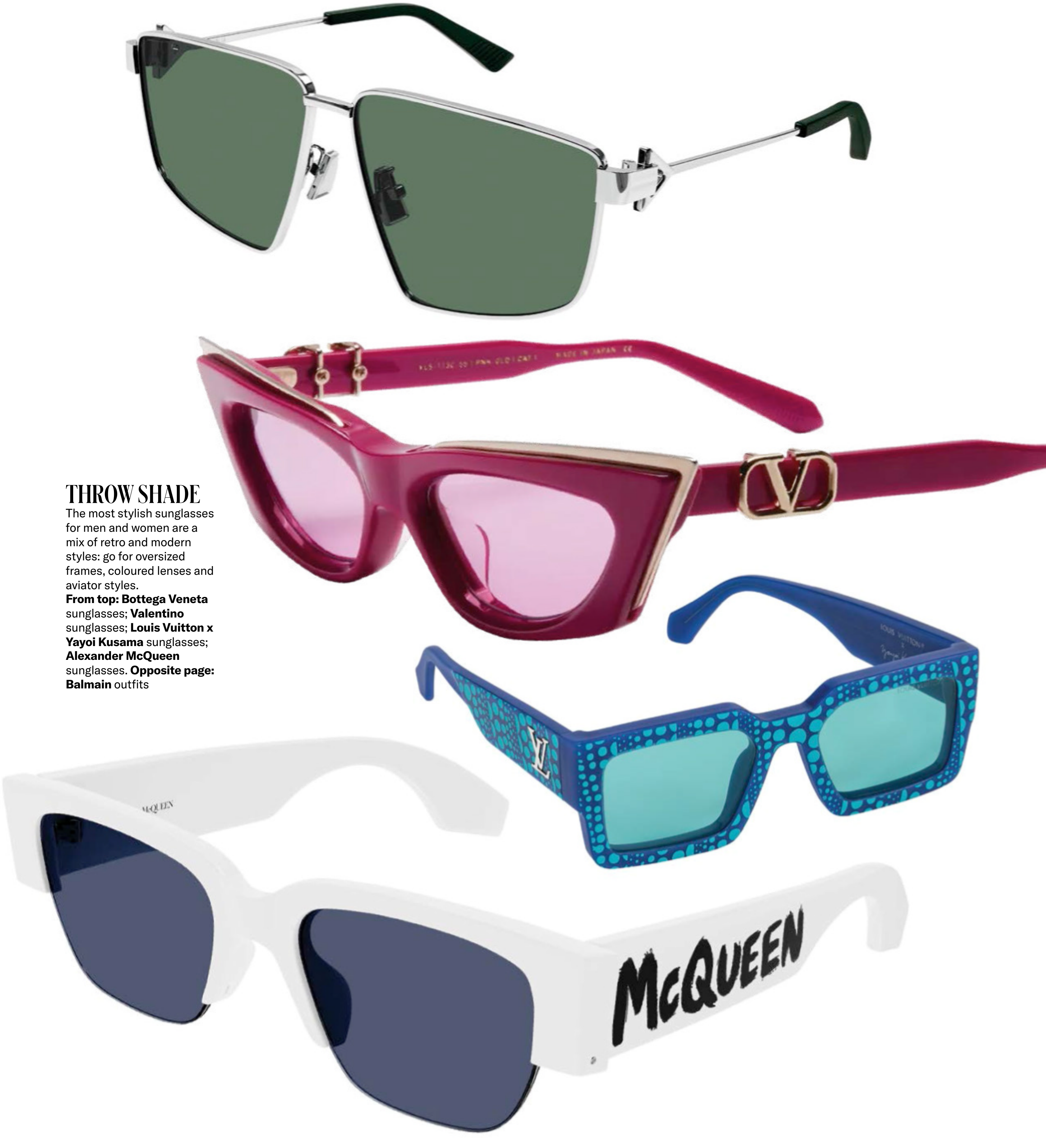
URBAN JUNGLE

Designers have been incorporating classic safari elements into modern, streetwear-inspired looks. Think utility jackets, earthy tones and natural materials like canvas, leather and linen for a rugged, adventurous aesthetic. **Clockwise, from top left: Loro Piana** jacket; **Fendi** hat; **Kenzo** T-shirt; **Tod's** sandal; **Brunello Cucinelli** shorts. **Opposite page, clockwise from left: Zegna x The Elder Statesman** outfit; **Fendi** outfit; **Brunello Cucinelli** backpack

IMAGE **PAOLO FICHERA (FENDI)**

0 - 24

BRUNELLO CUCINELLI



THROW SHADE

The most stylish sunglasses for men and women are a mix of retro and modern styles: go for oversized frames, coloured lenses and aviator styles.

From top: Bottega Veneta sunglasses; **Valentino** sunglasses; **Louis Vuitton x Yayoi Kusama** sunglasses; **Alexander McQueen** sunglasses. **Opposite page: Balmain** outfits

A DELICATE SITUATION

Think of it as the summer edition of the sheer trend: lace is in and more delightful than ever. As seen on the Chanel Métiers d'art 2023 runway, lacy dresses and ensembles add a touch of femininity and romance to your wardrobe. **Clockwise, from top left: Simone Rocha** bag; **Chanel** outfit; **Christian Louboutin** heel; **Chanel** outfit. **Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Paco Rabanne** top; **Valentino** blouse; **Dior** earrings; **Comme des Garçons** dress; **Sea** outfits

AS SEEN ON SCREEN

Take inspiration from *The White Lotus* for your own European vacation: explore tropical prints and colours for a day by the sea, and accessorise with beaded necklaces and straw sandals. **Clockwise, from below: Chanel** bag; **Max Mara** dress; **Stella McCartney** sandal. **Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Tod's** shirt; **Casablanca** necklace; **Nanushka** hat; **Gucci** bag; **Etro** shorts

BUCKET LIST

Fashion powerhouses are giving sought-after bucket bags some extra love this summer. Often featuring drawstring ties and slouchy silhouettes, they offer plenty of room for all your daily essentials. **Clockwise, from top left: Dior** bag; **The Row** bag; **Balenciaga** bag. **Opposite page: Jil Sander** outfit

miu miu

POCKET CHANGE

Pockets reign supreme this summer: it's all about elevating the utilitarian look of traditional cargo pants and jackets for a more refined, chic take. **Clockwise, from top left: Sacai** top; **Brandon Maxwell** outfits; **The Attico** jumpsuit; **Acne Studios** bracelet. **Opposite page, clockwise from left: Et Ochs** outfit; **Miu Miu** bag; **Givenchy** boot

Highlights from Watches and Wonders 2023, Richard Mille introduces its first women's sports watch, and Rolex's dedication to producing the finest timepieces

Tatler

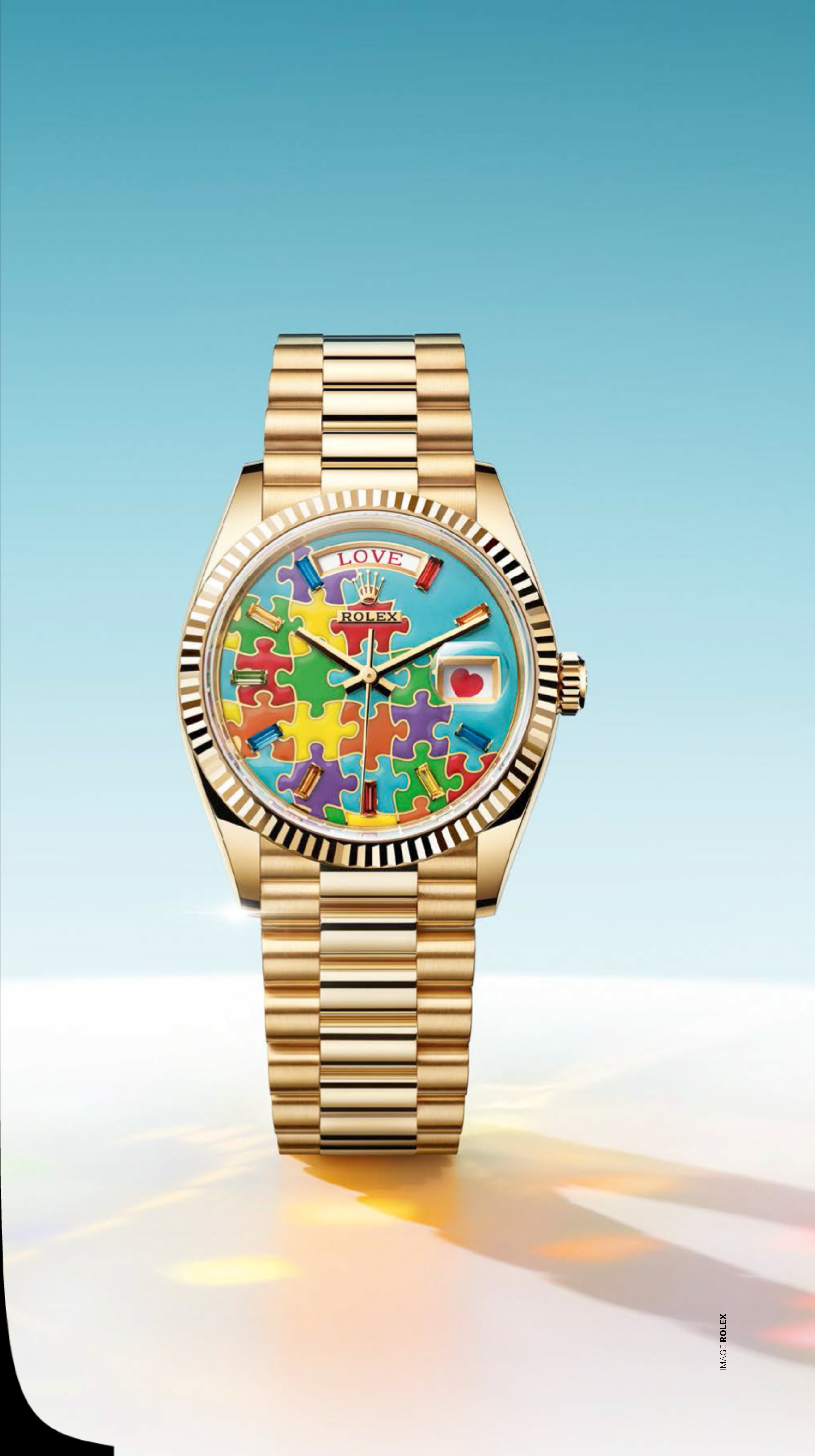
WATC

Hublot MP-13 Tourbillon Bi-Axis Retrograde.
Opposite page: Two-time Olympic heptathlon champion Nafissatou Thiam wears the **Richard Mille** RM 07-04 Automatic Sport

IMAGE **RICHARD MILLE (THIAM)**

CHES

EDITOR'S PICK



Rolex introduced an unexpected edition of the Oyster Perpetual Day-Date at Watches and Wonders 2023 that it describes as "full of joy and energy". Turn the crown and you'll see why: you can choose to display one of 31 different emojis in the date counter, as well as encouraging words like "Peace", "Faith" and "Gratitude" in the day counter. This whimsical attitude is emphasised by a vibrant dial constructed using champlevé enamelling in a jigsaw puzzle pattern. The hour markers are baguette-cut sapphires in colours that correspond to the dial.

Rolex Oyster
Perpetual Day-Date
Puzzle

IMAGE **ROLEX**

PICKS

BE A SPORT

Chronographs appear to be a hot horological trend this year, and Hermès has jumped on board by building on its H08 collection, which debuted in 2021. The maison introduced a new chronograph edition of the athletic, modern watch this year at Watches and Wonders. With a monopusher at 3 o'clock, the cushion-shaped case is fashioned from a block of multilayered composite, high-performance material that is robust yet lightweight, and the case shape is echoed in the two cushion-shaped chronograph counters and date window. Orange highlights, such as the luminous appliqué numerals and hour markers, contrast with the black dial.

HERMÈS
PARIS
SWISS MADE

Hermès H08 Chronograph

TALE OF TIME

The new Breguet Quantième Perpétuel 7327 embodies the house's essence: a watch that is ergonomic, with sophistication in its DNA. The perpetual calendar, an 18th-century watchmaking innovation by the founder, displays the exact date while accounting for the fluctuating length of the months and the leap-year cycle. The mechanism is based around an hour-wheel-derived gear system and a large central lever that drives the entire motion on a daily basis; the watch is equipped with the calibre 502.3.P, which, at only 4.5mm thick, is one of Breguet's thinnest.

The dial features a Clous de Paris hobnail pattern and displays a moonphase at one o'clock, while the day and date appear at the bottom and the month is indicated via a retrograde hand. The secret Breguet signature, created by the founder in 1795, appears between 11 and 12 o'clock, as well as between 12 and one o'clock.

Breguet Quantième Perpétuel 7327

FREAKIN' GOOD

With this latest release, the Freak solidifies its status as Ulysse Nardin's flagship reference. The time is displayed via a spinning tourbillon that completes one complete round in one hour, while the bezel serves as the crown for setting the time. There have been several incarnations over the years, and this year, it returns to its beginnings while also incorporating advancements from earlier generations of the Freak. The notched bezel, for example, is an homage to the original Freak, while the open gear train comes from 2013's Freak Cruiser, and the striking, black DLC-coated titanium case with rose-gold bezel recalls last year's Freak S.

ULYSSE NARDIN
FREAK

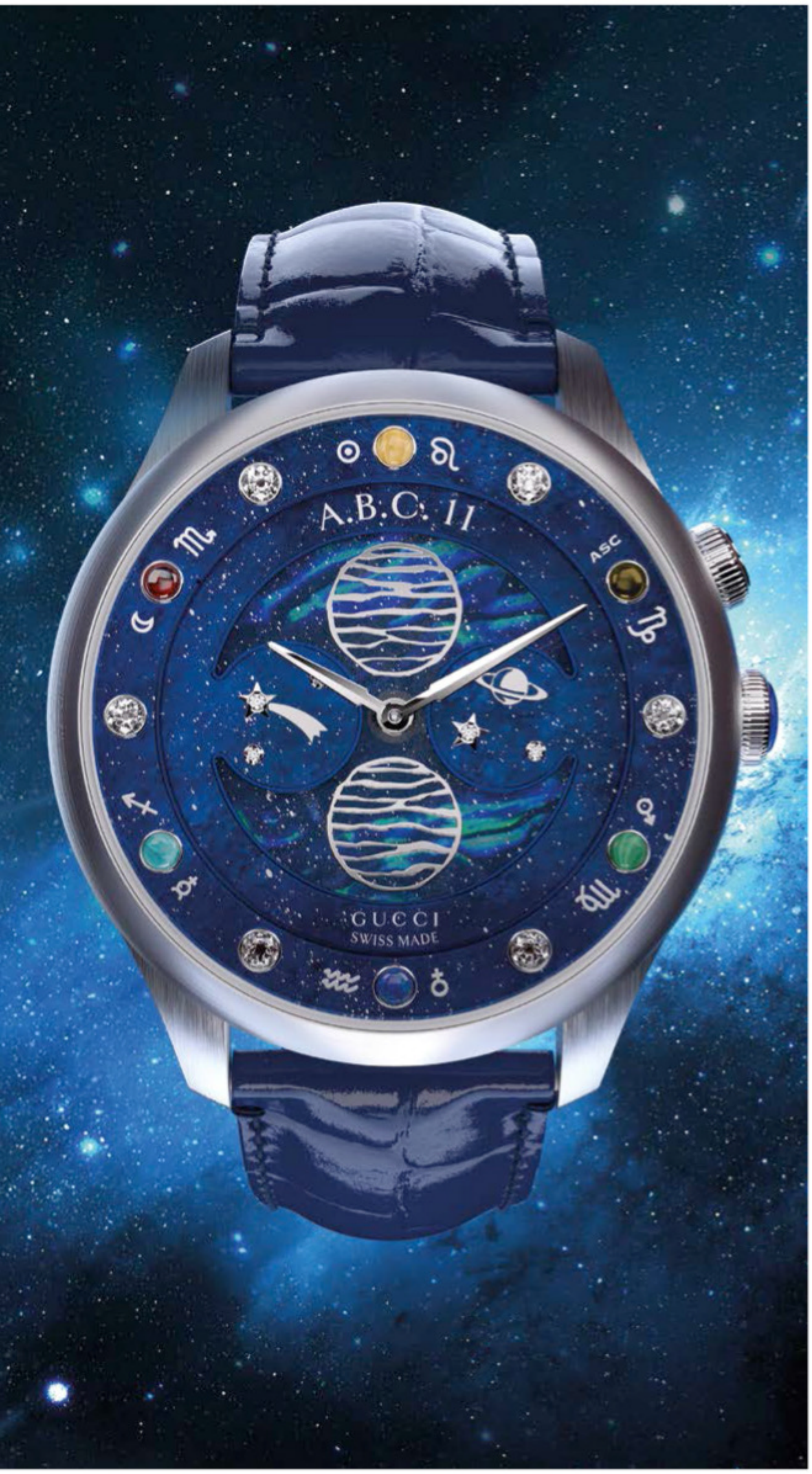
Ulysse Nardin Freak One

IMAGE **JVA STUDIOS (HERMÈS)**

GUCCI GANG

Why do we love Gucci's 2023 reference of the G-Timeless Moonlight? The customisable watch face displays the precise location, time and date of your birth, while six gemstones and six diamonds, representing the zodiac signs, alternate on a rotating flange. The internal ring can also be engraved with up to five letters or characters, along with an oscillating weight indicating your zodiac constellation and an adjustable alligator strap. A deep blue aventurine glass dial laid over a mother-of-pearl disc draws you into the watch's mystical appeal.

Gucci G-Timeless Moonlight



SMALL TALK

CHRISTIAN KNOOP

The head of design at IWC Schaffhausen talks about how the pandemic dictated design trends and how the Swiss watchmaker, known for masculine-looking references, is vying for female fans by producing smaller dials

What is the biggest challenge in your role?
The most difficult problem is putting together a collection that reflects the brand and that customers can recognise and [differentiate] from other companies, [but which is] also commercially relevant and sustainable. You can be really sharp [in design aesthetics] and on-brand, but you risk missing the commercial components, such as trends. As a result, there will always be a need for a balance, which we must strike between customer reality, being a commercially relevant brand and the product portfolio. Ladies' watches, for example, are an important part of IWC, but there were times when we primarily focused on men's pieces, which helped establish a really crisp and recognisable brand profile.

How do you find this balance between commercial needs and design aesthetics?
It's a dialogue. Nowadays, the product development teams have up to ten disciplines around the table, including designers, case engineers, movement engineers, product managers, marketing and sales teams, people from the test laboratory, customer service centres and so on. It's understandable that each of these individuals has a unique perspective on the product. But, in the end, all of these varied points of view contribute to a greater product than we had 10 years ago. This is what enables us to become more focused and successful as a brand.

What design trends do you expect to see in the next five years? Right now we're seeing a lot of smaller dials.
This is very hard to predict. We've seen the watch business be influenced by the pandemic in recent years, with [casual] sports watches becoming more popular. People understood that watches could be worn not only with formal attire but also as streetwear, which influenced aesthetics such as the colour range available. I wouldn't be surprised if it returns to a more basic, conventional, vintage-inspired visual expression at some point.

Design versus technology: who wins in the end?
At IWC we make this our motto: form follows function.

How does gender influence watch design, in your experience?
I know that when we introduced our midsize Portofino in 2014, we eschewed the phrase "ladies' watch" and wanted to make [watches] gender-neutral. IWC has recently embraced the female customer, particularly in Asia, by developing gender-fluid production. We've introduced smaller dials in the Pilot lines, the Portofino and, of course, the current 40mm Ingenieur, as we work towards a gender-neutral product offering. Women are increasingly interested in the IWC brand, and we have really good brand recognition, particularly in China.

BEFRIENDING GRAVITY

For a long time, watchmakers have been devising methods to eliminate the effects of gravity on a watch's function. But Roger Dubuis has changed the game by befriending it instead. A case in point is the Monovortex Split-Seconds Chronograph concept watch, which contains a cylindrical oscillating weight dubbed the Turborotor at 12 o'clock that maintains the watch-winding efficiently by embracing gravity. This patent-pending breakthrough is paired with the Conical Monovortex Tourbillon, which has a 360-degree trajectory that cancels the negative effects of gravity. Rounding out the complicated profile is a split-second chronograph with a unique, isotoxal, star-shaped, rotating 30-minute counter housing a tripartite hand, carrying the numerals 0, 1 and 2, that rotates along the 0-9 digits on the right.

Roger Dubuis Monovortex Split-Seconds Chronograph

BEST OF DAYS

The Royal Oak Offshore Selfwinding Chronograph pays homage to its 1999 End of Days version (Ref 25770SN), released in 1999 in collaboration with Arnold Schwarzenegger. With a 43mm case, this variant is composed of black ceramic with titanium elements, as seen in the studs, push-pieces and caseback. The watch features a black dial decorated with a Mega Tapisserie pattern typical of Royal Oaks, and is illuminated with touches of yellow luminescence on the tachymeter scale, hour markers and blackened white-gold hands. A calfskin strap with a textile effect and yellow or black stitching completes the look.

Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Offshore Selfwinding Chronograph in black ceramic

PIONEERING SPIRIT

In 1935, Longines filed for a patent for its flyback mechanism; this year, the brand has returned to its roots by adding the function to its Spirit collection. This watch features a new in-house calibre with a power reserve of 68 hours. It is magnetism-resistant, has a silicon balance spring and is certified as a chronometer by COSC. A translucent caseback displays all of the calibre's characteristics, including a customised weight engraved with the Longines Spirit collection's globe and the name Longines Flyback. This new model also stands out for its elegant aesthetics: satin, matt, polished and engraved features, a bidirectional bezel with a blue ceramic insert and luminous markings, and a blue sunray dial.

Longines Spirit Flyback

IMAGE **DENIS HAYOUN (AUDEMARS PIGUET)**

Top of the Game

In its quest for excellence, Rolex has maintained the vision of its founder Hans Wilsdorf through the years *By Leslie A Levine*

12
ROLEX
GENEVE
9
3
SUPERLATIVE CHRONOMETER
60
40
20
SWISS MADE

The wristwatch may be ubiquitous today, but it was not a common sight back in the early 20th century. Hans Wilsdorf precipitated a paradigm shift with Rolex by overcoming three fundamental challenges that wristwatches faced, and in so doing made them viable timekeeping instruments that replaced pocket watches as the timepiece of choice. His vision of producing the best wristwatches possible—and continually improving on them—is one that the brand maintains even today.

SETTING MILESTONES

The first challenge concerned precision and Rolex triumphed in 1914 with a wristwatch that was awarded a "Class A" precision certificate by England's Kew Observatory, then the highest authority for chronometric precision. This was followed in 1926 with the invention of the Oyster case with its patented system of a screw-down bezel, caseback and winding crown, which met the challenge of waterproofing. Finally, the year 1931 saw Rolex tackle the challenge of self-winding with its self-winding mechanism with a free rotor called "Perpetual"—the culmination of a series of patented ideas that would become the standard adopted by the entire watchmaking industry.

Of course, these were but three milestones in Rolex's history; other breakthroughs abound. When American test pilot Chuck Yeager broke the sound barrier in 1947, he had a Rolex Oyster on his wrist. Similarly, the first recorded successful ascent of Mount Everest in 1953 had Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay both equipped by Rolex. More recently in 1960, Rolex's experimental Oyster, the Deep Sea Special was the first timepiece to reach the bottom of the Mariana Trench, which marks the deepest point on Earth. This was paralleled in 2012, when an experimental Rolex Deepsea Challenge watch was attached to the submersible that James Cameron used to descend to the same depths and later inspired the Oyster Perpetual Deepsea Challenge that was launched in 2022.

STAUNCH INDEPENDENCE

Watchmaking excellence at Rolex's level is never the result of mere luck or coincidence. Instead, each factor that contributes to it is carefully accounted for—and controlled. Autonomy is especially vital. In Rolex's case, this begins with the brand's independence as an entity, which not just affords the company the freedom to take the long view on things, but also allows it to focus on going its own way in expressing its vision of watchmaking.

Rolex's independence is bolstered by its sheer technical capabilities, thanks to its completely vertically integrated manufacture. The brand currently maintains four production sites, all located in Switzerland. At its superlative Bienne site, movement components, from 200 to almost 400 for the most complex calibres, are manufactured with extreme precision. In Chêne-Bourg, traditional métiers d'art such as gem-setting and enamelling are practised alongside modern techniques such as the production

IMAGES ROLEX

of Cerachrom components. Meanwhile, the facilities at Plan-les-Ouates are focused on raw superlative materials such as Rolex's proprietary Everose gold, which are smelted in-house in the brand's own foundry. These materials are variously stamped, cut, drilled and machined to create components such as middle cases and bracelet links, which are then finished. Finally, the Acacias site is responsible for watch assembly. It is also here that complete watches undergo Rolex's suite of internal tests to qualify for the brand's Superlative Chronometer certification, which guarantees their precision and reliability. A fifth site in Bulle is currently being developed.

Beyond its production capabilities, Rolex is committed to bettering every aspect of its watches. For this, it relies on its research and development division, which has dozens of members grouped into four areas: innovation; materials and technologies; the watch (case and bracelet); and the movement. This multidisciplinary team conducts fundamental research across these four categories to constantly improve Rolex's watchmaking and, consequently, its timepieces. From physicists to microtechnology engineers and statisticians, the diversity of the division gives it myriad perspectives from which new ideas can be developed and subsequently integrated.

SUPERLATIVE QUALITIES

Rolex watches, from the dressiest references to the most rugged and technical ones, share eight fundamental qualities. Three of them—precision, waterproofness and autonomy—were, as described previously, major advancements in wristwatches. Beyond these, the brand strives for robustness, simplicity, craftsmanship, comfort and durability. Taken together, these traits make for a well-rounded timepiece as well as reveal Rolex's superlative approach, which explains why its watches are a category unto themselves.

From top: A timepiece in the testing stage during Rolex's research and development process; the final visual and functional check of an Oyster Perpetual Datejust 41. **Opposite page, from top:** The new Rolex Perpetual 1908; the waterproofness of each finished watch is tested in a hyperbaric tank

Complementing this approach is Superlative Control, Rolex's in-house unit at its Acacias facility that is responsible for testing all watches before they leave the manufacture. Every timepiece must pass the laboratory's gruelling battery of tests to be certified a Superlative Chronometer, after their movements have first passed the tests administered by the Swiss Official Chronometer Testing Institute to be recognised as chronometers. This proprietary standard is significantly more stringent than the wider industry's norms and speaks to a guaranteed level of performance that is backed by a five-year international warranty.

CONSISTENT EXCELLENCE

Are there some Rolex watches that embody the brand's values more strongly than others? The answer is a resounding no, and it is also this level of consistency across Rolex's timepieces that sets it apart from its contemporaries. Every single Rolex watch is simply held to the same standards, and each is as good an example of Rolex's watchmaking as another. Given the brand's commitment to continually improve on its watches, however, one can certainly argue that the latest versions of every model are the best ones yet. It is exactly how Wilsdorf envisioned the brand, over a century ago.

Tick Talk

Watches and Wonders, the world's largest luxury watch trade show, made its return to Geneva this March. Here are some of the key novelties to know among the many exciting timepieces unveiled *By Annabel Tan*

CARTIER

One of the most talked-about brands at Watches and Wonders this year, Cartier unveiled some 80 novelties—the largest number at the fair. The maison revisited several of its iconic timepieces, from collections such as the Tank, Pasha, Baignoire, Panthère, Santos and more, by way of new interpretations. The new Santos-Dumont Skeleton watch certainly turned heads, as Cartier's skeleton timepieces usually do. Equipped with Cartier's new 9629 MC automatic skeleton calibre, the 31 mm watch comes in three versions: yellow gold with blue lacquer; rose gold; and steel. As its name suggests, its details pay tribute to Brazilian aviation pioneer Alberto Santos-Dumont. The movement, for instance, features a micro-rotor in the shape of the Demoiselle—a trailblazing plane designed by the pilot in 1907—soaring over a globe.

CHANEL

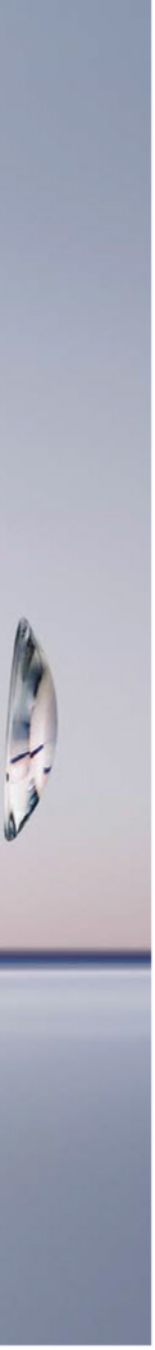
As part of the Chanel Interstellar capsule collection, many of the maison's novelties this year were inspired by the cosmos, science fiction and time travel. These have been interpreted in various ways, with the new J12 Cybernetic being a particularly eye-catching creation. A white pixelated motif appears on the J12 for the first time, making for a stunning contrast with the black bezel and black lacquered dial while effecting a playful merging of the real and digital worlds—almost as if the watch is crossing over from the physical reality into a digital one. Housed in a ceramic and steel case, the Caliber 12.1 self-winding movement provides the J12 Cybernetic with a power reserve of 70 hours.

CHOPARD

Chopard first introduced the use of Lucent Steel—an ultra-resistant,

CHANEL
J12
AUTOMATIC

IMAGES CARTIER; CHANEL



luminous alloy composed of 80 per cent recycled materials—in 2019 with the first Alpine Eagle. This year, the maison announced its commitment to using Lucent Steel for the production of all its steel watches as part of its ongoing sustainability initiatives. With that, Chopard unveiled a couple of new timepieces made with the alloy, including the Alpine Eagle 41 XPS. Compared to its predecessors in the collection, this novelty has a much cleaner dial thanks to the small seconds display at 6 o'clock—previous models feature a date window between 4 o'clock and 5 o'clock. The salmon pink dial colour, which Chopard has dubbed "Monte Rosa Pink", is also an attractive new shade that is made even more radiant by the textured pattern on the dial's brass base.

HUBLOT

Hublot presented a new MP-13 which, for the first time, combines the tourbillon and retrograde display in one 44 mm brushed-titanium timepiece. On top of that, these complications are more sophisticated: the in-house double-axis tourbillon completes a full rotation every minute on one axis, and every 30 seconds on the other. This is an impressive technical feat and to make it even more visually hypnotic, the tourbillon is skeletonised and suspended. This MP-13 Tourbillon Bi-Axis Retrograde also ensures a power reserve of at least four days. Due to the energy-intensive requirements of a retrograde display, having a watch with the three elements of double axis, bi-retrograde (where the hour hand skips instantly from one hour to the next, while the minute hand moves steadily) and four-day power reserve is extremely rare. But if anyone can pull it off, it's Hublot, which will be limiting the production to just 50 numbered pieces.

IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN

Famed watch designer Gérald Genta's Ingenieur SL Reference 1832 from the 1970s has been reinvented as the Ingenieur Automatic 40 this year, boasting the same bold design codes as its predecessor. One striking difference, however, is the introduction of functional, polygonal screws on its bezel, as opposed to the purely aesthetic recesses that were screwed onto the case ring before. The recesses were in different positions on each watch, but these new screws secure the bezel to the case and are always in the same positions. Available in four variants—three in stainless steel and one in titanium—the standout has to be the reference in stainless steel with an aqua dial. This blue-green hue is a new signature colour for the brand and is enhanced with a grid design. All four Ingenieur Automatic 40 models are equipped with the in-house 32111 calibre with a power reserve of 120 hours, and a soft-iron inner case to protect against magnetic fields.

JAEGER-LECOULTRE

The focus at Jaeger-LeCoultre this year: the Reverso, which was first introduced by the brand in 1931. Arguably one of the most renowned watches from the art deco era, the icon saw three new reinventions that pay tribute to its roots, as part of the Reverso Tribute collection. The Reverso Tribute Chronograph in particular is a nod to the groundbreaking Reverso Chronograph of 1996, which was not only the first chronograph movement shaped according to a rectangular case for Jaeger-LeCoultre, but also the first manually wound integrated chronograph developed from scratch in the post-quartz era—a testament to the manufacture's pioneering spirit and technical prowess. Similarly, the new Reverso Tribute Chronograph has a

Clockwise, from top left: Chopard Alpine Eagle 41 XPS; Hublot MP-13 Tourbillon Bi-Axis Retrograde; IWC Schaffhausen Ingenieur Automatic 40; Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso Tribute Chronograph. **Opposite page, from top:** Cartier Santos-Dumont Skeleton; Chanel J12 Cybernetic

IMAGES **CHOPARD; HUBLOT; IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN; JAEGER-LECOULTRE**

specially developed movement: the Calibre 860, which is rectangular to fit the case. It comprises no fewer than 300 components, resulting in an aesthetically balanced dial layout on the reverse side, with a large chronograph seconds display on the upper half of the dial and a retrograde 30-minute indicator on an arc at the base, and a time display on the front side. The watch is available in pink gold or steel.

PANERAI

The Panerai Radiomir Annual Calendar represents a significant milestone for the brand as it is the first time an annual calendar complication has appeared in a Panerai watch. Specially developed in-house for the Radiomir collection, the sophisticated complication is displayed legibly on the dial, with the day and date shown at 3 o'clock and the months printed on an external moving disc, with an arrow at 3 o'clock indicating the current month. (Note, though, that all the abbreviations are taken from the Italian calendar.) Also present are distinguishing Radiomir details: a 45 mm cushion-shaped case, a signature gradient sun-brushed sandwich dial filled with Super-LumiNova, and a cone-shaped crown.

TAG HEUER

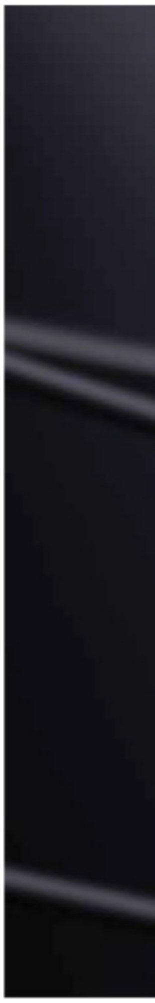
Last year, Tag Heuer unveiled its groundbreaking Diamant d'Avant-Garde series, where lab-grown diamonds were embedded for the first time on a chronograph case, crown, dial and indexes. This time around, the Swiss watchmaker takes its cutting-edge expertise and innovation a step further by setting lab-grown diamonds in unique custom shapes on the new Carrera Plasma Diamant d'Avant-Garde's matte black aluminium bezel and bracelet. Together with those on the 36 mm Carrera case, crown, dial and indexes, there are a total of 124 custom-made lab-grown diamonds totalling 15.5 carats on the watch. The dazzling dial is perhaps the most disruptive feature of the timepiece, achieved by growing a vast number of diamond crystals as one through chemical vapour deposition, or CVD, technology. In addition to these bold and innovative design details, the Carrera Plasma Diamant d'Avant-Garde is equipped with the Calibre Heuer 02 Tourbillon Nanograph movement, which features a tourbillon at 6 o'clock and provides a 65-hour power reserve.

TUDOR

While Tudor's popular Black Bay line has always featured signature elements of the brand's earlier dive watches—namely, its first, the Oyster Prince Submariner reference 7922 from 1954—the new Black Bay 54 is the closest modern take on the original so far. Compared to recent Black Bay models, the Black Bay 54 retains the classic proportions in a smaller 37 mm case, and boasts design details such as a shoulder-less crown, snowflake hands that are pinched at the base like the way they appeared in 1954, spring bar holes that pass through the lugs, and a bezel edge that has been redesigned with a modern take on the 7922's ergonomic pattern. The Black Bay 54 also features other contemporary touches such as a subtle satin radial-brushed dial and an adjustable T-fit clasp for a better fit. It is equipped with the calibre MT5400, which provides a 70-hour power reserve, and is available with a satin-brushed steel bracelet or a black rubber strap.

VACHERON CONSTANTIN

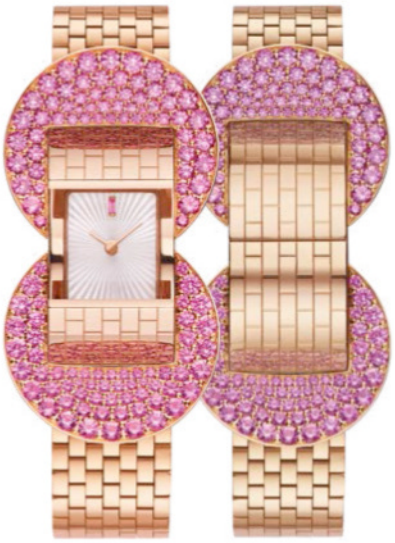
Retrograde displays are a signature of Vacheron Constantin and this year, the Swiss luxury watch manufacturer chose to highlight it further by incorporating the



IMAGES PANERAI; TAG HEUER

Clockwise, from top: Tudor Black Bay 54; Van Cleef & Arpels Ludo Secret watch; Zenith Pilot Big Date Flyback; Vacheron Constantin Patrimony Retrograde Day-Date. **Opposite page, from top:** Panerai Radiomir Annual Calendar; Tag Heuer Carrera Plasma Diamant d'Avant-Garde

complication in all its novelties across the Traditionnelle, Patrimony, Overseas and Les Cabinotiers collections. The Patrimony Retrograde Day-Date stands out for its elegant, minimal design inspired by special retrograde displays from the 1920s and '30s, with a lustrous sunburst dial in salmon framed by a 42.5 mm case in 950 platinum.



Since 2022, the maison offers its salmon dials exclusively in timepieces with 950 platinum cases and this combination certainly adds a refined touch to this dress watch. On the technical front, the new watch features the in-house self-winding calibre 2460 R31R7/3 with a 40-hour power reserve.

VAN CLEEF & ARPELS

There is a magic and whimsy about secret watches that Van Cleef & Arpels continues to pull off beautifully, time and again. The latest interpretation of its Ludo Secret watch, which is shaped like a belt—the signature code of the Ludo bracelet created in 1934—comes in rose gold with either diamonds or pink sapphires. On the wrist, this precious piece looks just like a stylish bangle, but a gentle squeeze of the gem-set curved motifs opens up the bracelet portion above them to reveal a guillochéd white mother-of-pearl dial.

ZENITH

Zenith's Pilot collection, the manufacture's longest-standing line, has been completely redesigned this year. While the watch still bears the essential qualities of durability, legibility and intuitiveness, its most distinctive new feature is a flat-top round bezel fixed on top of a rounded case. In addition to a time-and-date-only automatic model, Zenith has released the Pilot Big Date Flyback. Bringing to the collection the flyback function originally conceived for aviators who wore thick sheepskin gloves to simultaneously reset and restart the chronograph function with a single push of a button, the 42.5 mm watch comes in either stainless steel with interchangeable straps in black cordura-effect rubber and brown leather, or black ceramic with interchangeable black and khaki cordura-effect rubber straps.

IMAGES **TUDOR; VACHERON CONSTANTIN; VAN CLEEF & ARPELS; ZENITH**

IMAGES **RICHARD MILLE**

Winning Streak

Richard Mille looked to six of the world's most inspiring and influential athletes when designing its first dedicated women's sports watch

By Annabel Tan

Richard Mille has long been associated with the world of sports, and some of its friends and partners include the world's top professional athletes. Continuing to build and strengthen these bonds, the brand teamed up with six outstanding sportswomen to inform its first women's sports watch, the RM 07-04 Automatic Sport.

These athletes—current world No 1 golfer Nelly Korda; Ester Ledecká, Winter Olympics triple gold medallist for alpine skiing and snowboarding; Nafissatou Thiam, two-time Olympic gold medallist in heptathlon; Ukrainian high jumper Yuliya Levchenko; and motorsports stars Aurora Straus and Margot Laffite—come from various disciplines, and each shared her unique experiences and requirements to help define the attributes of the watch.

From the racetrack to the alpine slopes, the new RM 07-04 Automatic Sport is built to take on whatever environment its wearer finds herself in and the lifestyle she chooses. It is sleek, versatile and weighs a mere 36 g—including its velcro

From top: American racing driver Aurora Straus; the RM 07-04 Automatic Sport in Carbon TPT; a sapphire caseback reveals the watch's skeletonised dial. **Opposite page:** American professional golfer and Richard Mille partner Nelly Korda

strap—so as not to hinder any movements or performance, making it lighter and more compact than Richard Mille's men's models, but with the same calibre of capability and technical sophistication.

The watch comes in six different colourways, with each reflecting the personality of the athletes who helped to create the watch. The one with a black case and a green strap, for instance, expresses track and field champion Thiam's, and is the only one with a Carbon TPT case. The other five versions, which have cases made from Quartz TPT: cream white with a burgundy strap, mauve with a blue strap, salmon pink with a black strap, green with a pink strap, and dark blue with an orange strap.

Both Carbon TPT and Quartz TPT are high-tech materials that are strong yet lightweight, and exclusive to Richard Mille. Not only do they have non-allergenic properties and a high resistance to shocks, UV rays and wear, they also have a distinct appearance bearing unique striations due to the multiple layers of parallel filaments in the composite material.

Housed within these hardy tonneau-shaped cases is the newly developed CRMA8 calibre, an in-house skeletonised automatic movement with hours, minutes and a function selector. It took about three years to create the RM 07-04 Automatic Sport, in large part due to the challenges that came with developing such a compact skeletonised movement, while at the same time ensuring high shock resistance and aesthetically integrating the exterior with the interior.

"We did not take a minimalist approach in this design; we chose an airy movement that reveals its complexity at first glance," says Cécile Guenat, Richard Mille's creative and development director. "Offering a women's skeleton sports watch is a gamble that few have dared to take. This [watch] is as much about aesthetics as it is about technicity."

In order for the watch to reliably support athletes in various sporting arenas, the movement was built with a grade 5 titanium baseplate and bridges, supplemented by a black PVD treatment. The movement also underwent a series of rigorous tests to confirm its resistance to 5,000 g's of acceleration—an important feature for golf and motorsports—and sits comfortably on the wrist with a diameter of 30.5 mm and a thickness of 10.35 mm.

For a watch that is versatile enough to wear on a daily basis as well as for intense sporting activities, the RM 07-04 Automatic Sport certainly meets the mark on all fronts—ergonomically, technically and aesthetically. The only downside is having to decide which colour to get.

The role and influence of women in Cartier's history, the final chapter of Louis Vuitton's Spirit high jewellery collection, and gender-neutral jewellery is here to stay

Tatler JEWEL

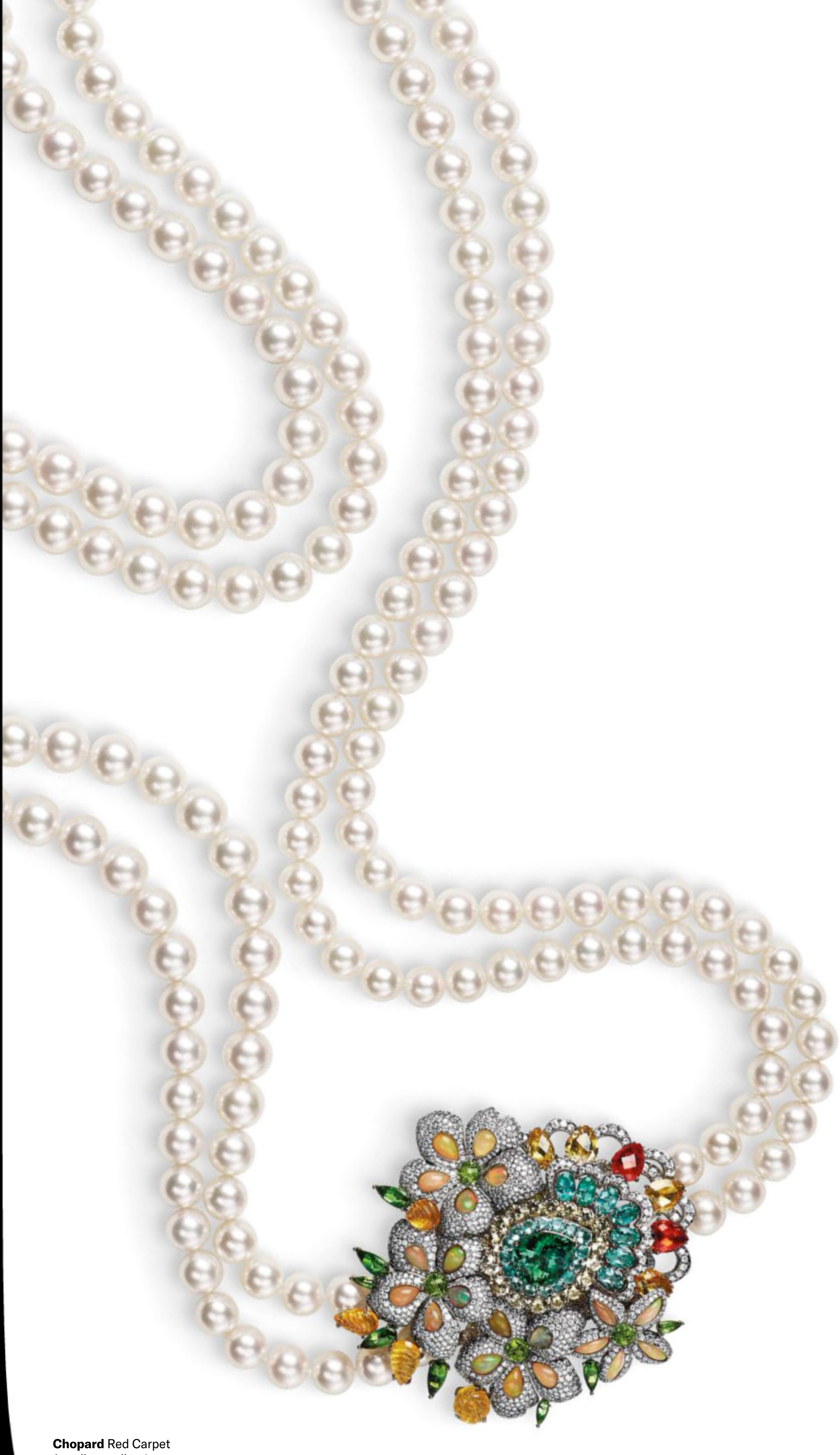
Elle Fanning wears the **Cartier** Grain de Café collection. **Opposite page: The Collection by JLG** Story Durbar necklace

LERY

IMAGE **GREG WILLIAMS (CARTIER)**

1 EDITOR'S PICK

Chopard has been the official partner of the Cannes Film Festival since 1998, and has left a trail of sparkles on the red carpet by draping Hollywood's top stars in its high jewellery and watches. In keeping with tradition, the French maison's Red Carpet Jewellery collection stole the show yet again this year: a pearl necklace with a floral theme made of Chopard's Fairmined ethical 18K white gold and studded with beryls, opals, peridots, sapphires and tourmalines stood out to us, especially when paired with the matching earrings made of cascading strings of pearls.



Chopard Red Carpet Jewellery collection pearl necklace

SMALL TALK

MIMI SO

Mimi So talks about her journey from starting her small, eponymous jewellery business in New York to selling it to the Richemont group—then buying it back to recapture her independence and creativity

What were the challenges you faced when you decided to become a jewellery designer?
I grew up in the [jewellery] business working for my parents and in a culture that celebrates jewellery. Being the youngest of three, I was always very rebellious, and I had my own vision that led me to go to Parsons [School of Design] in New York. I wanted to create what I just thought would be great. [At that time] I felt very young, free, creative and excited, but I really didn't know the path just yet. My father couldn't believe it. He was like, "She wants to be what?" He was worried about his image among his friends because my sister is a doctor and my brother is an engineer, and I was the other daughter, who [in his mind] was choosing to be a starving artist.

Why did you decide to name the brand after yourself?
I knew that if I put my name on it, that meant that I was going to stand behind the brand, the reputation; there's a difference: it's not like a façade that you can hide behind. It was about me putting a stake in the ground: this is who I am and this is what I represent. And it was really intimidating because I chose to do that in a very male-dominated industry, in a business that's on 47th Street in New York City. [Looking back], I feel like I was a lamb in the lion's den. I persevered, but I had a lot of people that would come into my store and would say, "When your boss comes in, give him my business card."

What was your biggest challenge in setting up your store in New York?
I didn't have the money to show the world that I'm very serious [about what I do] but I had the intent, so we educated our customers. A lot of people discovered me slowly and took me seriously. When you look like you're 12 when you're 21, it's hard to be taken seriously, but over time, I developed a thick skin. I was [so deep] in my own universe of what I wanted to create that I made what I would wear [myself].

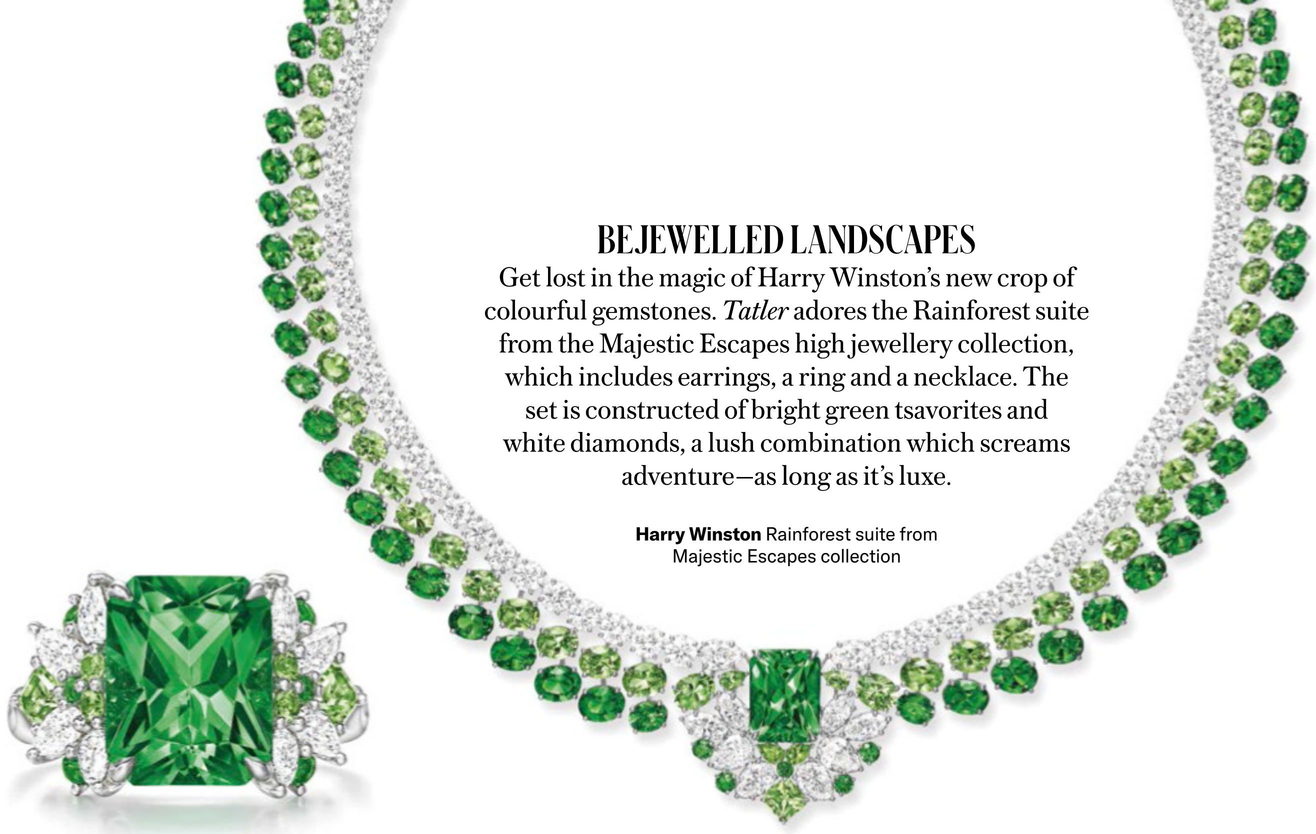
Your jewellery was featured in the TV show *Sex and the City*. How did that happen?
A lot of the stylists had started coming to me at my store [to source jewellery—this is before the show was a hit]. I believe in supporting my friends and what they are doing. I used to carry my jewellery in a brown bag after [work] hours, and the shoots used to be at this dark warehouse kind of place. And I kept muttering to myself, "This is a bad idea; you're going to get mugged." And then *Sex and the City* became a thing.

Tell us about Richemont offering to buy a stake.
It was after I had styled quite a lot of Hollywood A-listers on the red carpet. At that time, [red carpet] jewellery used to be quite heavy. I was the first jewellery designer to pioneer fashionable fine jewellery on the red carpet; it was unheard of, because it [red carpet jewellery] was always very classic, but a lot of fashion designers were interested because they wanted jewellery that did not compete with their clothing.

[The way] Richemont found me was very organic: the celebrities, the stylists, the whole thing was just so powerful. So they [Richemont] courted me. They wanted me to help them with Cartier and I could not move to Paris—I had a small business here in New York that I loved. So after a long romance, I decided that I would sell a portion of the company to Richemont in 2004, and I consulted with the group as a designer for Cartier, Piaget and Montblanc. [After the acquisition, I felt like] I was living on a plane. It was fast and furious. And in 2006, we were opening in Tokyo, it was crazy. It felt like the Super Bowl, but like every day.

But then you bought back your shares from Richemont in 2007. Why and how did that happen?
All major conglomerates at some point need to buy the majority and have ownership. And I wasn't ready for that. This is where I can really speak about being a woman and being a young mom, a young bride and having a family. It was like having two husbands: your real husband and your business husband, the [Richemont] group. It would have meant that the group would decide if I was on the road all the time, or if I'm opening up in lots of stores, and I just didn't want to be an absent mom. I felt it was very important that, as a woman, I made this commitment to give birth to a child. This was tricky, and I just felt like maybe the time wasn't right [to sell], so I decided that I wouldn't sell the majority share to the company and would keep our independence, ownership and creativity.

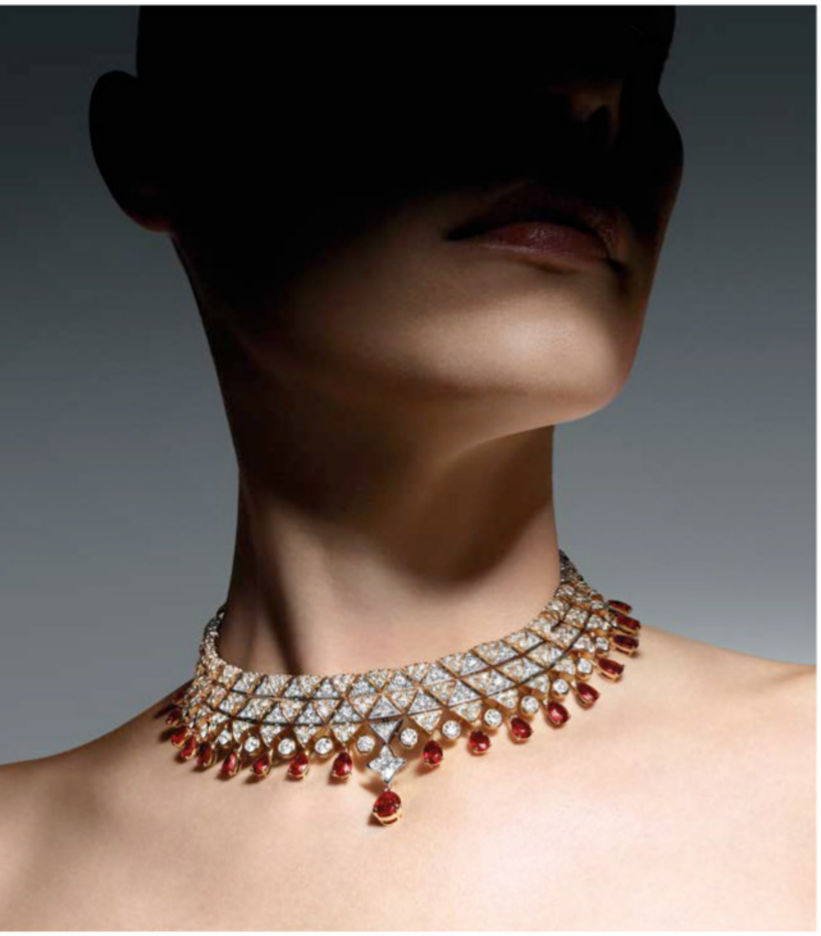
Once you sell to a really large conglomerate, as incredible as that sounds, it's also stifling. It's glamorous and glorious, and everything that they say it is, but you'd better be ready for that trade-off. So if I was famous for getting in, I was even more famous for leaving, because no one does that. It was pretty nice to have someone that has an endless chequebook, so I ate a lot of ramen for a long time to keep the business going and to ensure my company was going to have that independence. And I think I'm really, really proud of that, because for a female owner, that's rare. That's so rare.



BEJEWELLED LANDSCAPES

Get lost in the magic of Harry Winston's new crop of colourful gemstones. *Tatler* adores the Rainforest suite from the Majestic Escapes high jewellery collection, which includes earrings, a ring and a necklace. The set is constructed of bright green tsavorites and white diamonds, a lush combination which screams adventure—as long as it's luxe.

Harry Winston Rainforest suite from Majestic Escapes collection



SOARING SPIRITS

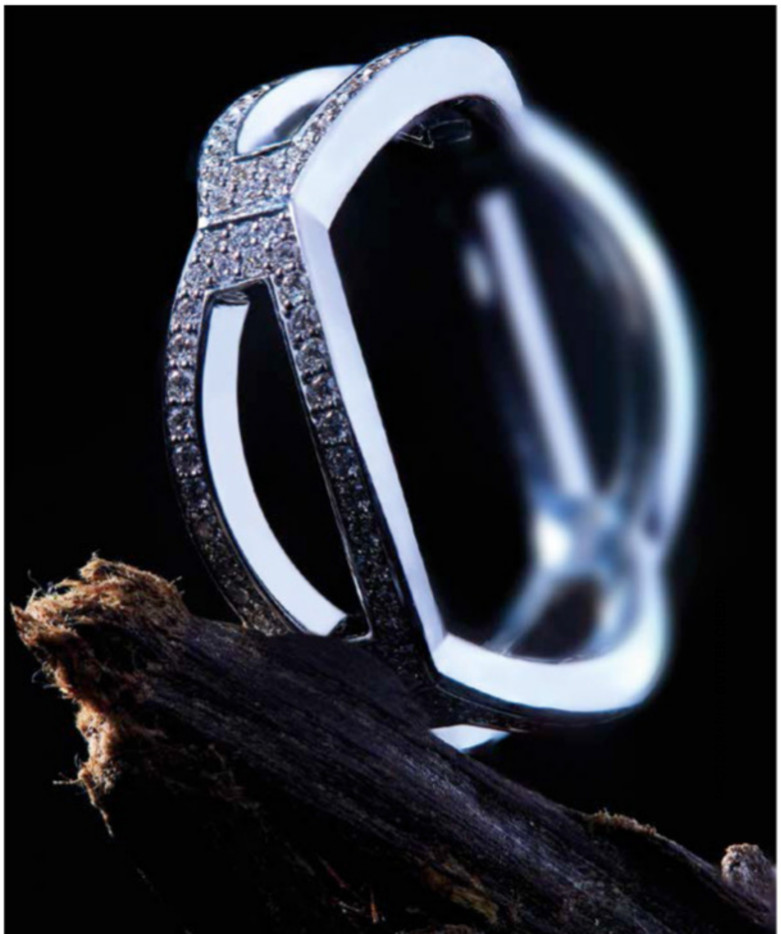
Louis Vuitton has introduced 30 jewels in the final chapter of its Spirit high jewellery collection. Each piece stands out with the brand's signature codes and rare stones. The collection is divided into four themes: Destiny, Liberty, Fantasy and Radiance. The ruby takes centre stage in the 10 Destiny pieces, with the star necklace featuring a 3.13-carat pear-cut pigeon blood ruby.

Louis Vuitton Spirit Chapter II high jewellery collection

AN ICON IS BORN

The idea of creating a golden bridge inside the sapphire crystal of a Corum watch was conceived when Corum co-founder René Bannwart met with independent watchmaker Vincent Calabrese. The partnership saw the watch movement manufactured in 18K white gold, and the Golden Bridge became an example of pushing the frontiers of art and technology. This year, the watchmaker debuted a jewellery line inspired by this timepiece. The two-tone, 18K white gold and rose gold pieces feature ethically mined white diamonds and look like a dream when worn alongside the original watch.

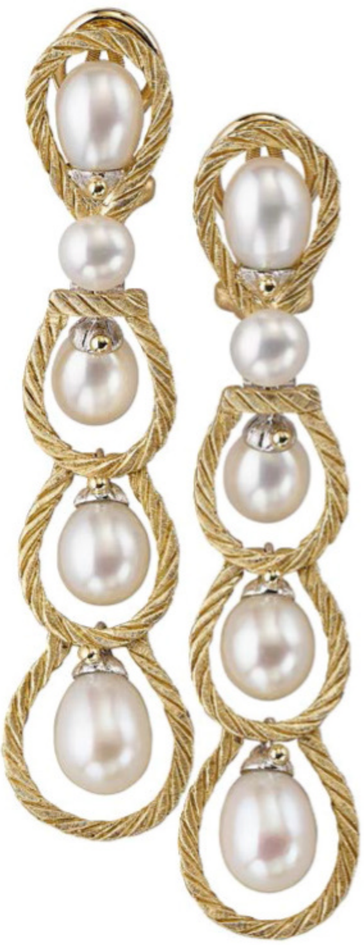
Corum Golden Bridge jewellery collection



GILDED GLAMOUR

Cartier recently announced Elle Fanning as its new global ambassador and face of the Grain de Café collection. “The Grain de Café collection embodies so much of what makes Cartier’s style and savoir-faire unique, from exquisite goldwork to the precious transformation of an everyday object,” says the actress. “It is an honour to become the face of a creation that brings together elegance, glamour and radiant femininity.”

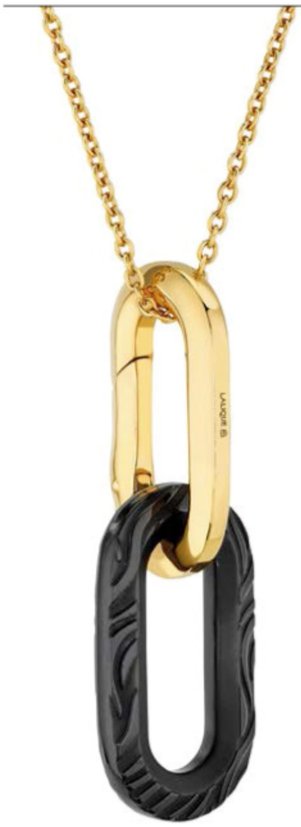
Cartier Grain de Café collection



TWISTED GOLD

Buccellati’s Oro collection employs the maison’s renowned twisted thread jewellery-crafting process, which is native to Italy, to create a distinct texture in yellow gold. The collection includes a bracelet, stud earrings, dangling earrings and a necklace, which are embellished with pearls to exude a timeless elegance.

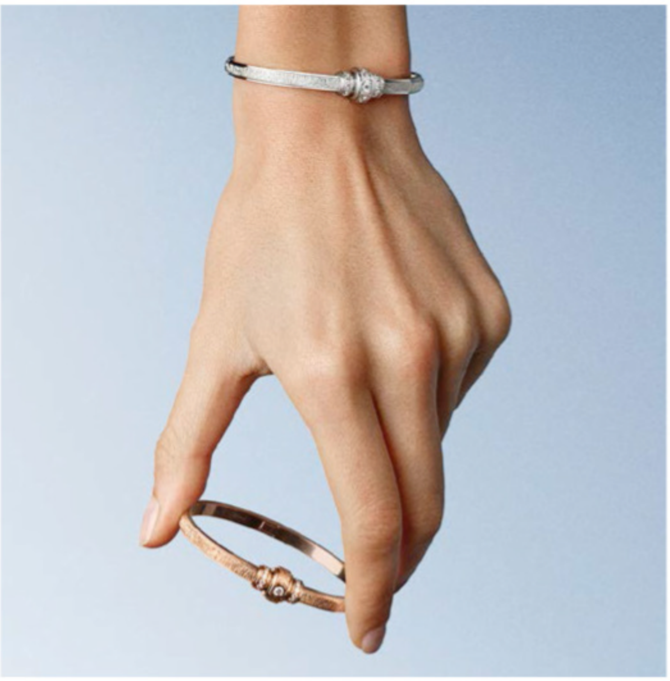
Buccellati Oro collection



CHAINED UP

Lalique has interpreted the rock ’n’ roll trend of chunky links in a new collection for summer. The brand is really embracing the spirit of individuality, with extra crystal and metal links so you can customise the pieces to suit your mood. We especially love the black crystal links interlocked with 18K gold-plated brass links.

Lalique Spring-Summer 2023
Collection Empreinte Animale



MERRY-GO-ROUND

Piaget’s signature gold engraving technique, Palace Décor, adds an extra touch of luxury and radiance to the new line of Possession Palace Décor bangles. Using a special method of hand-engraving to create irregular grooves on the gold creates a lustrous texture and effect, which complements the playful Possession bands—another Piaget signature—in the centre of the bangle that can be spun around.

Piaget Possession Palace Décor bangles

IMAGE **GREG WILLIAMS (CARTIER)**

From left: Cartier image, style and heritage director Pierre Rainero, Carina Lau, Pansy Ho, Cartier CEO Cyrille Vigneron, Michelle Yeoh, Cartier regional MD of North Asia Nigel Luk, Brigitte Lin and Palace Museum director Louis Ng attend the exhibition. **Below:** Vigneron

Her Many Facets

Tatler speaks to Cartier CEO Cyrille Vigneron about the *Cartier and Women* exhibition at the Hong Kong Palace Museum

It's a brave brand that takes "women" as the theme of its major exhibition. The move is fraught with danger and potential pitfalls: how does one take on a gender as a theme and do it justice? How can a gender be adequately and insightfully represented? And how much more difficult is it in the context of today's conversation on gender and sexuality?

Cartier took on this challenge with its *Cartier and Women* exhibition, which is open to the public until August 14 at the Hong Kong Palace Museum. The exhibition showcases approximately 300 items from its archival collections, as well as special pieces on loan from collectors such as Brigitte Lin, Pansy Ho and Carina Lau. The exhibits include jewellery, timepieces, precious objects and archival records, some of which date back to the 19th century.

This is Cartier's first major exhibition on the role and influence of women in the brand's history, and CEO Cyrille Vigneron takes us through the strategy involved in the exhibition's structure and focus, the evolution of the role of jewellery through the decades, and how it all ties in to the celebration and empowerment of women today.

Why did Cartier decide to focus on women for this exhibition?

It came from the [Palace] Museum: "What about Cartier women?" The theme is the link between the jewellery and the role women play in society. Jewellery was, in some ways, representing the weight of their condition and the strength of their character.

Although this theme looks simple in some ways, it is also a story about female empowerment. Three of the most charismatic women in Asia [loaned their pieces] for this exhibition, [and so] have also taught us how jewellery can be a way for them to express the power of their own character.

IMAGES JEAN-FRANÇOIS ROBERT (VIGNERON); CLUK (EXHIBITION)

Jewellery is a part of their story.

Has people's relationship with jewellery changed over time?

The power of jewellery is that, even if you don't see it as a symbol, the symbol acts on you. If you wear a wedding band, it becomes your talisman. If you wear an engagement ring, you wear [a promise]. More people are stacking bracelets as a fashion symbol, but if you realise that the stacking on the wrist is protecting [one of] the most vulnerable parts of the body, like warriors do, then jewellery is something that can both oppress and protect. It's also one of the rare things you wear directly on your skin.

So, even if you say it's just a mere accessory, in fact, it's made of noble material and, because of the place you put it, it expresses more. Not many people are conscious of that, but that is the power of jewellery; its power comes to you even when you don't realise it.

The exhibition features pieces commissioned by famous women. How have these design requests changed over the years?

A special customer order to represent something continues [to this day], and inspiration can come from the past or the present. It's like designing your house; you can ask an architect [to work on it alone], but you also want to be part of it to make it really yours.

We don't do everything which is asked; we say it has to stay within the Cartier style. We have to understand the purpose behind it, and then we contribute to that. And it [results in] some of the most extraordinary pieces, like Jean Cocteau's Academician sword, which was made to represent the myth of Orpheus. There is always something to celebrate, and jewellery can be the best way to [remember] it forever.

Clockwise, from top: Cartier Paris tiara (1907); Cartier Paris Yin-yang pendant (1919); Cartier Paris engagement ring (1956); Cartier Paris Bib necklace (1947)

There has been a bigger conversation about gender fluidity in recent years. How do you see this impacting the jewellery industry and the Cartier brand?

Especially in the 19th and 20th century, jewellery was very much linked to femininity and women wearing it. For a period of time, men thought the most precious thing they could wear was a watch. [But in comparison], 18th-century jewellery was more [commonly worn by men], for royals to express their nobility. In today's "de-stereotyping", we see more and more men happy to wear jewellery.

Some tend to think that going towards "unisex" [pieces] means the abolishment of gender [as a category], but it seems the contrary is true. The way people want to [express] their biological sex or sexual preference, or [define] how they feel or what they want, can create many more categories. Instead of disappearing into a "category", it seems more people are craving a way to express themselves in a different way. And in that, jewellery plays a big role.

What do you hope people take away from this exhibition? What would you like them to understand about Cartier and its vision?

First, that there have always been beautiful ways to celebrate women, even in periods where women have been constrained. There has also been a strong movement of women's liberation. So, the takeaway would be: be yourself, now. Whoever you are, find a way to express yourself in a beautiful way. We're all unique in our identity, and we can all be unique together, with others.

When you see the [Cartier] creations, they're all so different. But you can find a common thread, in [their] attention to detail, sophistication and pure beauty. You can be inspired, truly, by anything. So, look at everything and see the beauty wherever it may lie—and try to express it in your own way.

IMAGES NILS HERRMANN/CARTIER (TIARA, BIB NECKLACE, YIN-YANG PENDANT); VINCENT WULVERYCK/CARTIER (ENGAGEMENT RING)

A Golden C(age)

A closer look at the history of jewellery indicates that social constructs have frequently determined who can wear it—but the future is for him, her and them *By Amrita Katara*

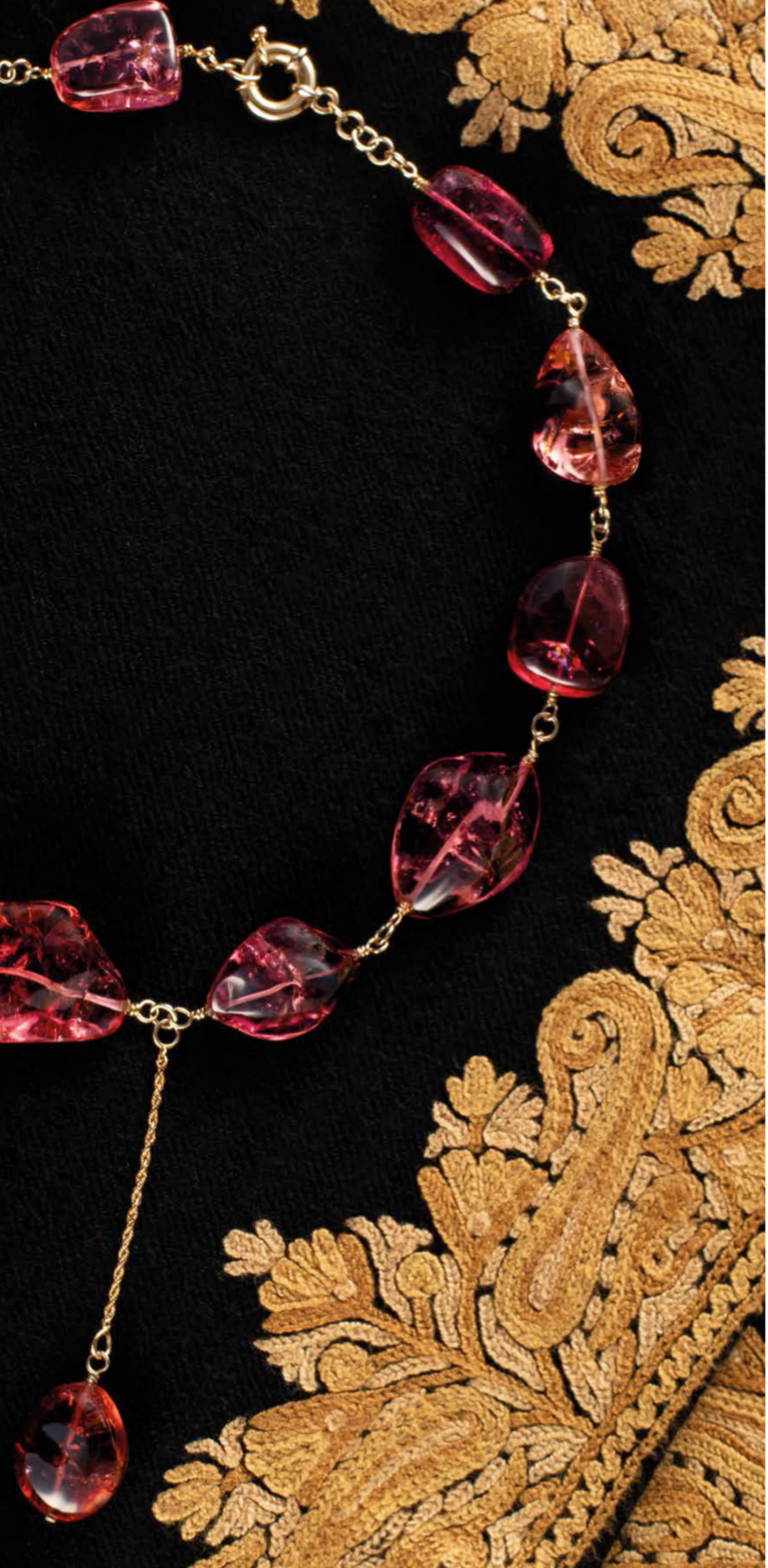
It's 2023. Humankind has broken the shackles we once created for ourselves, and the concept of gender and our attitude towards identity is slowly evolving. In recent years, the fashion industry has taken note of this shift, with more brands offering unisex clothing lines. But what about jewellery? Can it be gender-free? And if so, how does a luxury brand cater to this new market without compromising on quality or style? A conversation with some of the most renowned names in the high jewellery industry helped *Tatler* realise that we are, in fact, returning to our roots.

"Historically, men have worn jewellery in all different cultures: from kings in Europe to the maharajas in India, the tsars in Russia to the pharaohs in Egypt. Jewels and stones were dear to men as a sign of power and wealth," says Hélène Poulit-Duquesne, the CEO of French high jewellery maison Boucheron. "I have always wished men would wear jewellery again because that is what they have always done. I don't see why this should change."

Boucheron, founded in 1858 by Frédéric Boucheron, has a rich history of crafting exquisite jewellery for royalty and aristocrats in France and around the world. Among the numerous male clients of the maison since the 19th century, the Maharaja of Patiala "is probably the most memorable", says Poulit-Duquesne. Back in 1928, he entrusted Boucheron with what would become the largest special order ever placed in the history of Place Vendôme and by extension of high jewellery. In January 2021, Boucheron's creative director Claire Choisne offered a reimagined perspective on this moment with the unveiling of the Histoire de Style, New Maharajahs collection. "Our genderless approach to jewellery is nothing new for Boucheron. We have always focused on the emotions our creations arouse, and emotions have no gender," says Poulit-Duquesne.

Another remarkable male jewellery enthusiast from the archives known for his style was the late Maharaja of Indore, Tukoji Rao III Holkar. "I found him extremely chic," says Julien-Loïc Garin, founder of bespoke Hong Kong jewellery boutique The Collection by JLG. The maharaja collected 1,200 jewels during his reign alone. He visited the Chaumet high jewellery salon in southern France in 1913, when he was shown a necklace suspending two pear-shaped diamonds of 46.70 and 46.95 carats. He bought the necklace, along with the two white diamonds later known as the Indore Pears. The Indore Pears were worn by the maharaja in a famous portrait by French painter Bernard Boutet de Monvel. In the 1920s, the diamonds were gifted to

The Collection by JLC Story Durbar necklace



Nancy Anne Miller of Seattle when she became the Maharani of Indore. She sold the Indore Pears to Harry Winston, who resold them privately.

In an era when men like Oscar Wilde did not hesitate to wear pearls or signet rings with their family crests, there seemed to be a sudden shift in mindsets after the onset of the industrial revolution. "It was due to the emergence of American bourgeois society that the shift occurred," says Garin. The working class took over. Wealth was no longer measured with power rings and family heirlooms. Gentlemen had started "making money out of investments, railroads and industrial goods". As a result, it was considered frivolous to wear jewellery to work. Fashion for men became uniform with black ties, hats and monotones, while jewellery disappeared for those who wanted to appear like they literally meant business. "And then in the 20th century with the World Wars, jewellery became something that represented non-working individuals, mostly women. Suddenly, men who wore jewellery were branded as feminine and not serious about their day jobs," he says.

But since then, much has changed. Bulgari, founded in 1884 by Sotirios Bulgari, is another high jewellery maison that embraces gender neutrality in its designs. It is known for its bold, colourful pieces, including its gender-neutral collections such as B.zero1 Rock and the Serpenti Misteriosi Intrecciati. "Jewellery always expresses emotions, but I don't think this is a reason to link it to the female gender. I believe a perfect example is our Serpenti line," says Lucia Silvestri, the executive creative director for jewellery at Bulgari.

With the advent of social media and pop culture, the conversation around jewellery expression has gained momentum. In 2014, the topic of jewellery for men caught the attention of many who spotted

Clockwise, from left: Boucheron Green Garden ring set; Lucia Silvestri; Ruby Autore; Hélène Poulit-Duquesne. **Opposite page, clockwise from left:** Autore Moda Cruz Cuff; Chantel Shafie; Chantel Shafie Jewellery Hong Kong Lunar Rabbit Medallion; Julien-Loïc Garin; Bulgari Serpenti Viper bracelet

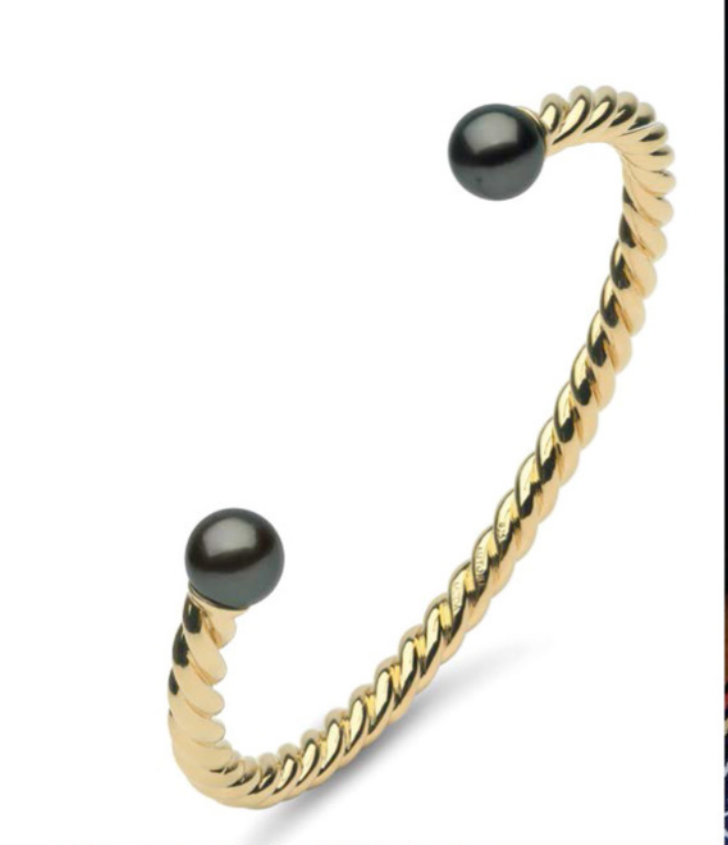
singer Pharell Williams walking down the red carpet wearing a chunky diamond necklace. Williams, who was recently appointed creative director of menswear at Louis Vuitton, is also the founder of Joopiter, a global digital-first auction house and content platform. He has previously auctioned jewels from his personal collection. Other sightings of male celebrities such as Jared Leto wearing a diamond necklace from Gucci's high jewellery collection at the Met Gala in 2019 and former One Direction member Harry Styles' gender-bending sheer black blouse and pearl earrings at the same event, saw a number of comments on social media, where they were praised by their followers for their innovative fashion choices.

"At the Met Gala, they [male celebrities] are all dripping in jewellery because it's becoming more socially acceptable. I'm getting approached now by men who want me to make medallions that can be worn as brooches," says Chantel Shafie, a Hong Kong-based bespoke jewellery designer. "Forty per cent of my clientele are gentlemen," agrees Garin describing jewellery as "a great show of taste", and that men are unapologetic about expressing themselves lately.

Thanks to this trend, brands recognise the importance of inclusivity and diversity in their product portfolio. "It is very important for us to keep up with the times and current needs that are increasingly trending toward a genderless aesthetic; so we also think of a design that reflects these characteristics while creating new jewels for lines such as B.zero1 or Bulgari Bulgari, for example, that can easily embrace new fluid aesthetic needs focused on a playful, versatile and easily wearable style," says Silvestri.

Boucheron's Poulit-Duquesne adds: "The trend of gender fluidity has emerged mainly in Asia, where we have seen the rapid development of jewellery worn by men." For instance, K-pop stars have contributed a lot to this trend. It all started in 2018, when BTS collaborated with South Korean jewellery brand Stonehenge.

IMAGE **ERICA FAVA (AUTORE)**



HONG KONG
$1000

Another K-pop group, Ateez, followed suit when they partnered with jewellery brand J.Estina to create a collection that was inclusive for all. These collaborations resulted in a broader understanding that gender is a social construct and that "listening to people makes it possible to understand them, to respect their uniqueness, to accept them in their differences, and to build collective intelligence [to create jewellery]", says Boucheron's boss.

Ruby Autore, founder of Autore Moda, a ready-to-wear, demi fine jewellery brand from Sydney that specialises in South Sea pearls, adds, jewellery "is just a reflection of the times we're in at the moment". The brand aims to embrace the "age of soft masculinity" with its designs. Having grown up on a pearl farm, Autore got into the jewellery business taking her parents' legacy ahead; they set up the business in the early 2000s and sell their jewels internationally across Europe, US and Australia, as well as in retail stores and e-commerce sites such as Farfetch and David Jones. According to the second-generation designer, brooches and pearls that were once prevalent in the art deco era "are going to have a big comeback this year", as we circle back to the era of the maharajas and royalty. Autore mentions that pearl bracelets, stud earrings and chains in particular are in demand among her male clientele.

High jewellery maisons, bespoke designers and fine jewellery brands are all taking a thoughtful approach to gender neutrality in their designs. Rather than simply unisex pieces, the market is full of jewels that are versatile and adaptable. This allows anyone to wear them in a way that feels authentic and true to their identity. Silvestri says, "Sometimes the expressive power that jewellery can convey is underestimated: it is amazing how strongly it can characterise an outfit, communicating a strong and charismatic personality."

IMAGE **RICCARDO ABATE (CRUZ CUFF)**

GenT
The Deep Dive
WHY DO GOOD LEADERS FAIL?
WHY DO SO MANY PEOPLE HATE THEIR JOBS?
LET'S TALK ABOUT MARS
HOW STARTUP VALUATIONS WORK
HOW TO CREATE HYPE
QUOTABLE

Tatler Gen.T
THE DEEP DIVE

An award-winning weekly newsletter

Unpacking the ideas and trends shaping Asia

Tatler Gen.T LIST

THE YOUNG LEADERS SHAPING ASIA'S FUTURE

We have had a rough start to the year, with high inflation and rising interest rates. Startups are facing tougher fundraising conditions than last year, which has pushed many of them to focus more on generating revenue and controlling costs. But as we've seen throughout the pandemic, an economic slowdown doesn't necessarily equate to a slowdown in innovation. In fact, you could argue that we're advancing scarily fast right now. And the Leaders of Tomorrow on this year's Gen.T

List are some of those leading the charge. Whether it's using artificial intelligence to make industries more efficient or tapping into nature's resources for healthcare solutions, the honourees we recognise this year—and every year—have one goal in common: to create a positive difference in the lives of others and those that come after them.

Chong Seow Wei
REGIONAL SENIOR EDITOR, GEN.T

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: FRIEND OR FOE?

From facilitating the creative process to fostering increased efficiency, Gen.T honourees weigh in on AI's potential to impact their businesses and the challenges of this rising technology

By Karen Tee

You would have to have been living under a rock to not have seen the ultra-viral image of Pope Francis rocking a trendy, oversized white puffer jacket. But dapper as he looks, make no mistake about it, this #ootd did not happen IRL; rather, it was generated by artificial intelligence (AI). It was created based on prompts, or instructions, which its creator had entered into the generative AI imaging tool Midjourney.

That this hyper-realistic image hoodwinked many into thinking it's real is just one of the reasons why the sudden proliferation of generative AI tools has become among the most hotly debated topics in technology in recent times. There have also been reports about how AI can be used to spread disinformation, with generative text tools like ChatGPT, for example, exhibiting a tendency to blur the lines between fact and fiction, and often making things up in response to user enquiries.

At the same time, there is no denying that AI has the potential to boost human creativity and productivity in positive ways, inspiring businesses in various sectors to take a closer look at how they can best adopt the technology.

"AI serves as a good challenge for us to be able to adapt in continuously finding creative solutions based on the needs of a specific project," says Philippines-based Patrick Martin, founder and CEO of digital content creation company Lit Lab Studios and 2022 Gen.T honouree. "I see it in smartphone video editing software and apps that allow AI to instantly stitch and sync videos based on beats and melody, making filmmaking and video editing more accessible to the general public."

AI is also becoming more important as an analytical tool used by investment firms and financial institutions. Foxmont Capital Partners' founding partner Jelmer Ikink, a 2023

> “With generative AI making it big, we have started to see weeks of work being done in just a matter of hours”

Jason Low
Co-founder and CEO,
Virtualtech Frontier

Gen.T honouree, shares that his company uses platforms that “combine consumer and market data estimates of apps through the analysis of big data to find new deals, as well as more easily tracking the performance of our portfolio companies”. He says that AI platforms can also help to speed up due diligence by “accessing and parsing large data sets quickly and in a structured way”.

Ikink adds that in venture capital, AI can be used to help companies identify the best exit strategies for their portfolio companies. This can be done through predictive analytics to identify when it is the best time to sell an investment, or through online marketplaces which often use AI to match the parties in structured liquidity programmes or direct secondary sales.

“Although AI is in its infancy in the Philippines, it has the potential to offer exciting solutions and investment opportunities as it continues to develop in sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, transportation and government services,” says Ikink.

Malaysia’s Jason Low, co-founder and CEO of metaverse and virtual spaces development company Virtualtech Frontier, is watching the space closely.

“Our platform mitoworld.io handles the creation of metaverses easily without code and enables a wide range of multimedia content like images, videos, 3D objects and music in the metaverse,” says the 2023 Gen.T honouree.

“We have seen a huge growth in generative AI that can actually accomplish all of this creative work that was previously done by individual specialists. It might take them weeks to render 3D files, for example, but with generative AI like Midjourney making it big, we have started to see weeks of work being done in just a matter of hours.”

This has led to some creatives expressing their concern that their jobs could cease to exist. The Gen.T honourees we spoke to, however, say there is little likelihood that machines will be displacing people any time soon, because the human element remains essential.

“I see the creative industry as an intentional platform that should be strongly anchored by critical thinking and human emotions—things that AI might find hard to replicate and execute in the near future,” says Martin.

While Martin has been hearing ideas on integrating ChatGPT and other AI-driven platforms into creative projects, his team uses them strictly as productivity tools. “The closest I would allow it to being a part of our workflow would be in efficiently generating presentations for whenever we encounter a creative block. This way, it serves as a tool for efficiency, not as the main means in accomplishing an entire presentation,” he says, noting that AI might also be useful for speeding up time-consuming tasks such as generating mood boards.

Likewise, 2023 Gen.T honouree Jennifer Zhang, who is the co-founder and CEO of Singapore’s Wiz.AI, believes that when harnessed appropriately, AI can be used to create an impact for the betterment of the workforce.

“We are committed to advancing AI technology and exploring diverse business use cases,” she says. “Our focus remains on upskilling the workforce and creating opportunities like prompt engineer and AI development roles that collaborate seamlessly with artificial general intelligence.”

That said, as with other rising forms of technology, there are significant challenges in using AI. They include the potential bias and inaccuracy of the data being used to train AI models. There are also security and privacy concerns.

“There have been many instances of AI that have generated strategies to penetrate cybersecurity for hackers and other threatening individuals,” Low cautions. “This will continue to be a concern and an uphill battle if no stronger policies are in place to control them. It is the same with other industries where AI is used to exploit vulnerabilities.”

But that doesn’t mean AI technology should be avoided.

“As with any discourse, there are both negatives and positives. Generative AI has the potential to work with human authors to create new collaborations. This is typical of new technologies and is not a one-way street,” says Alex Toh, local principal in the IP and Technology practice group of the law firm Baker McKenzie Wong and Leow in Singapore.

“Users and society can also influence technology,” he adds. “We must continue to engage in experimentation and discourse with new technology. If we do not do so, we will not be able to take advantage of it—and shape the way the technology is adopted and used. We must continue to do so in order to remain relevant amid technological change.”

> “Our focus remains on upskilling the workforce and creating opportunities that collaborate seamlessly with AI”

Jennifer Zhang
Co-founder and CEO, Wiz.AI

GEN.T LIST 2023 IN NUMBERS

Mainland China
Hong Kong
Taiwan
Thailand
Philippines
Malaysia
Singapore
Indonesia

8

The Gen.T List features people from eight countries and territories across Asia: Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Mainland China, Taiwan, Indonesia and Thailand

2016

The year the Gen.T List was first launched, which makes this year's edition our eighth

20

The number of categories in this year's Gen.T List

35

The number of events we've hosted or partnered with across the region in the last 12 months

42.5%

The percentage of women on this year's list. Thailand has the highest proportion of female honourees this year, at 56 percent

31.8

The average age of this year's honourees

4

The number of honourees who have previously been included on the Gen.T List

27

The number of honourees in our biggest category this year, Technology

US$105.4B

The total amount of disclosed funding that companies helmed by this year's honourees attracted between January 2022 and June 2023

74%

Just over 74 percent of this year's honourees are owners of their companies

How the list is compiled

36

The number of experts on the Tribe, our panel of industry heavyweights who helped nominate, review and select candidates for the list

18

The key criterion for the Gen.T List is achievement in the last 18 months

7

The number of months taken to put together this year's list

1,100

The number of people on the long list from which the final list of honourees was obtained

HOW DO YOU GET ON THE GEN.T LIST?

What are the criteria to get on the list and how are nominations screened? Here is everything you need to know

THE CRITERIA

The first thing we look for in a potential honouree is achievement in the last 18 months.

This can be measured by a number of metrics, including

- Growth of business (measured by customers, revenue, volume).
- Fundraising success.
- New product or service disrupting an industry.
- Increased geography of impact.

As we cover 20 different categories, we don't only use one set of metrics.

Success is defined in more than financial terms, so we look at more qualitative measures as well, which include asking whether the nominee has helped to make the world...

- *more creative?*
- *more innovative?*
- *more generous?*
- *more sustainable?*
- *more human?*

If we can confidently answer yes to one or more of the measures mentioned, the nominee has a shot to make the final cut.

THE PROFILE

A nominee must be either

- A founder or co-founder of their company.
- A C-suite executive with a key role in driving their organisation.
- An individual who is their own brand, such as an athlete, actor, artist,

PHOTO AKINDO/GETTY IMAGES (ILLUSTRATION); 500 GLOBAL AND PWC (PORTRAITS)

designer or musician. Honourees must be under 40 years old in the year the list is unveiled.

THE TIMELINE

The Gen.T List launches in June. Vetting of the list takes place between January and April.

We stop accepting all nominations for the year, both from our public nomination form and other sources, at the end of February. But nominations can still be submitted through our online form throughout the rest of the year—we will consider them for the next appropriate year.

THE VETTING PROCESS

The Gen.T team engages in numerous rounds of reviews. This amounts to more than 250 hours of meetings, and due diligence research and calls.

We are also supported by the Tribe, a panel of industry titans hailing from our eight markets and across a breadth of fields, which we assemble at the start of the process. They nominate candidates, review our longlist with us and work with us to identify the most promising individuals each year.

They serve as our eyes and ears on the ground, providing invaluable insights and expertise.

Beyond the list criteria, here are some of the other qualities they look out for in potential honourees of the Gen.T List:

“A leader who is able to think beyond their companies and consider their broader impact and responsibility to society.”

Vishal Harnal
Global managing partner, 500 Global

“A leader who is a relentless truth seeker in a world flooded with false information.”

Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala
Journalist

“A leader who understands the broader economic and societal impact of their business decisions—and makes them with authenticity.”

Andrew Chan
Asia Pacific ESG, Strategy and Transformation partner, PwC Malaysia

Tatler Gen.T List

Meet the 40 young leaders from Singapore shaping Asia's future

SCAN TO SEE
THE OTHER
HONOUREES
FROM ACROSS
ASIA ON THE
GEN.T LIST 2023

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

Creating the aesthetics, the forms and the functions of the future

← For enabling everyone to become a 3D designer

CJ Looi

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, PIXCAP

PixCap makes 3D design simple. The company, initially co-founded by CJ Looi as a way of turning motion capture videos into animations, now offers a browser-based editor that gives designers and marketers a choice of thousands of 3D templates that don't require technical skills or complex tutorials to use. It has one of the largest repositories of 3D design icons and is used by over 30,000 users in more than 60 countries.

↑ For using design to give people a second chance at life

Poh Yun Ru

DESIGNER, NUS DESIGN INCUBATION CENTRE

One agony of dementia is that patients lose basic life skills. But Poh Yun Ru's Rewind, a cognitive stimulation therapy tool, is turning back the clock. Rewind uses visual aids, motion tracking tools and sensory cues to spur memory, so patients can relearn how to make tea, water plants, walk dogs and perform other essential tasks. It won the 2022 Grand Prix at Lexus Design Award and iF Design Award.

EDUCATION

Empowering populations through new learning tools

← For fostering the tech talents of the future

Jackie Tan

HEAD OF PRODUCT, ANGELHACK

Jackie Tan designs web2 and web3 educational products for Angelhack, a global developer ecosystem that was acquired by blockchain accelerator Tribe. This includes education and upskilling programmes with institutes of higher learning to help mid-career switchers gain jobs in the tech industry, as well as developer engagement programmes such as bootcamps, incubators and hackathons. Jackie aims to build products that empower a million developers.

→ For using technology to help those who slip through the cracks

Yeoh Wan Qing

CO-FOUNDER, HATCH

Yeoh Wan Qing knows that opportunity is rarely equal, especially for at-risk young people outside the traditional school system. Hatch offers them comprehensive training in user experience and user interface design, with students learning web design and digital marketing, as well as communication and teamwork, and then serving internships with partner startups. It also runs its own media agency aimed at small businesses.

ENTERTAINMENT

▶ Pass the mic: a new generation is taking over

→ For her multipronged commitment to entertaining

Annette Lee

CONTENT CREATOR AND MUSICIAN

Singaporean talent Annette Lee has a knack for making people laugh. She's best known for her relatable comedic videos and music series with fellow Gen.T honouree Benjamin Kheng on YouTube and other social media platforms. She recently created her first mockumentary, *Asian Billionaires*, while her EPs *All Our Achilles Heels* (2017) and *Song For The Underdog* (2020) were recorded in Nashville with Grammy award-winning producers.

↑ For producing award-winning films and championing diversity

Tan Si En

CO-FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR, MOMO FILM CO

Tan Si En's credits as a film producer include *Wet Season*, which represented Singapore at the 2021 Oscars and won 12 international awards, including a Golden Horse Award; and *The Year Of The Everlasting Storm*, which premiered at Cannes in 2021. They also champion emerging talent with initiatives such as the Momo Distribution Grant and Objectifs Short Film Incubator. Next up is a queer and diversity content fund for Asia.

FASHION & BEAUTY

Accelerating Asia's ascent to global fashion domination

← For affordable, natural, cruelty-free skincare

Lynsey Lim

FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR, HANDMADE HEROES

What started as a hobby, with Lynsey Lim helping loved ones with natural, homemade skincare products, has turned into a global business. Her beauty brand, Handmade Heroes, is an Amazon bestseller, with its Ultra Sexy Lip Scrub holding the skincare number one spot and Drop Dead Gorgeous Dry Shampoo number two. Her products are also stocked in prominent department stores and endorsed by the likes of Hollywood A-lister Lily Collins.

FINANCE & VENTURE CAPITAL

Redefining how we invest and manage money

→ For supporting the leaders in web3 technology

Jeffrey Ma

CO-FOUNDING GENERAL PARTNER AND CO-CIO, WHAMPOA DIGITAL

With a background in private equity, Jeffrey Ma went on to lead $200 million in fundraising and investment at crypto giant Binance before diving into his current role: investing in founders who create innovative products that bring users into the web3 ecosystem. Whampoa Digital is backed to the tune of $100 million by Whampoa Group, the multi-family-office headed by Singapore's two prominent Lee families.

← For backing the maritime world's brightest and best

Shaun Hon

CO-FOUNDER AND GENERAL PARTNER, MOTION VENTURES

An innovative venture fund aimed at the maritime industry, Motion Ventures, co-founded by Shaun Hon in 2021, is unique in being backed by a consortium of global industry players including ship manager Wilhelmsen and port logistics operator HHLA. The $22 million fund has so far invested in startups including maritime operations automation platform Greywing, freight rate management platform Freightify and freight automation company Expedock.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

Feeding the world with innovative ideas and experiences

← For empowering restaurants to take control of their own future

Jonathan Lim

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, ODDLE

Restaurants need to get to grips with the digital future, but with margins already tight, technological upgrades can be prohibitively expensive. Enter Oddle: the company co-founded by Jonathan Lim goes beyond food delivery to provide no set-up cost online-to-offline smart data solutions for restaurants looking to go digital. It has 7,000 restaurants on its platform and a presence in Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

→ For letting restaurants take online orders directly

Jeroen Rutten

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, TABLEVIBE

Online ordering is a godsend for restaurants, but third-party apps often take sizeable commissions. Tablevibe, co-founded by CEO Jeroen Rutten, allows them to use their own apps and websites to take dine-in, pickup or delivery orders directly from diners, cutting out the middleman. Launched in Singapore in 2020, the Y Combinator-backed company has since expanded to six other markets, including Australia and the Netherlands.

↑ For putting restaurants in charge of their vehicles

Sai Alluri

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, MOMOS

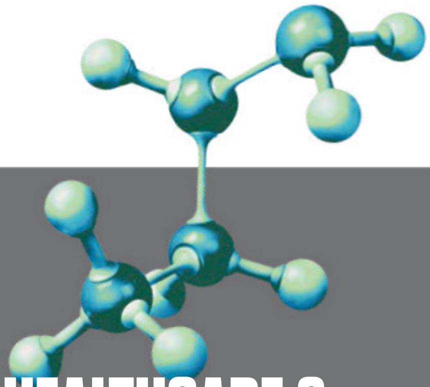
Sai Alluri co-founded Momos with Andrew Liu in 2020 to provide restaurants with a consolidated dashboard to maximise revenue through marketing, customer engagement and analytics. The platform acts as a handy tool for them to work across delivery platforms, social media and other digital channels. Sai previously started and ran GrabKitchen, the superapp's cloud kitchen network, which is Southeast Asia's largest.

→ For proving that sweet things come in small packages

Mohamed Al-Matin

FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE CHEF, LE MATIN

In 2020, Mohamed Al-Matin, formerly a pastry sous chef at Copenhagen's legendary Noma, combined three of humanity's great loves—convenience, variety and sugar—into a successful online bakery. He delivered boxes of gourmet pastries to Covid-era shut-ins, with each day's creations selling out in seconds. After the fog lifted, he opened Le Matin, a dine-in experience featuring his signature sweet and savoury delectables, ready-made at the counter or à la carte.



HEALTHCARE & SCIENCES

The health geniuses making innovation possible

↑ For bringing quantum computing closer to reality

Yvonne Gao

PRESIDENTIAL YOUNG PROFESSOR, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

Yvonne Gao is in the vanguard of building the computers of the future. The presidential young professor at the National University of Singapore's research focuses on creating the key hardware building blocks for robust and scalable quantum computers that have the potential to efficiently solve complex computational problems. Yvonne also mentors young scientists and promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion in science.

↑ For empowering pharmacies

Farouk Meralli

FOUNDER AND CEO, SWIPERX

Founded in 2014 by Farouk Meralli, SwipeRx connects more than 50,000 pharmacies and 250,000 industry professionals across Southeast Asia. Along with B2B commerce services, the company provides users with information to better manage pharmacies, as well as works with pharma companies, governments and NGOs. Its latest raise was $37 million in Series B funding from investors including pharmaceutical giants Sanofi and Johnson & Johnson, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

↑ For making gastrointestinal diagnosis smarter

Jonathan Ng

FOUNDER AND CEO, ITERATIVE HEALTH

With Iterative Health, Jonathan Ng is working to transform gastrointestinal healthcare, using AI to improve diagnosis by creating complex endoscopic videos. The company also has a database to screen patients suitable for clinical trials. It has raised more than $195 million from healthcare players including Johnson & Johnson and Eli Lilly, and VCs including Insight Partners, Breyer Capital and Alumni Ventures.

MANUFACTURING & ENERGY

▶ Making and fuelling the next generation of products and services

→ For bringing power to the people

Avishek Kumar

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, VFLOWTECH

Vanadium batteries last decades before degrading, use low levels of carbon dioxide and never explode, making them an intriguing alternative to lithium. Led by co-founder Avishek Kumar, VFlowTech is developing vanadium-based EV charging stations and shipping modular units around the world for microgrid or off-grid applications. Its VFlowTech Power Cubes store solar and wind energy, and are transforming the lives of users in rural South Asia and Africa.

MEDIA & MARKETING

The storytellers shaping the world's knowledge

For providing minority groups a safe space to share their stories

Sharvesh Leatchmanan

CO-FOUNDER AND EDITOR, MINORITY VOICES

Bullied as a teenager for how they looked and sounded, Sharvesh Leatchmanan began to reject their own culture in a bid to fit in. In May 2018, they started the Minority Voices Instagram account and website to create a community of peer support, providing a forum where people from minority groups can share their experiences. The platform also organises public town halls and workshops to discuss local issues such as housing and racism.

For choosing his own path and showing others the way

Lee Yik Keat

PHOTOGRAPHER

Seeking creativity over stability, Lee Yik Keat turned down a career in aerospace engineering to become a self-taught photographer and influencer—and built his own empire. Known for his distinctive style of shooting Singapore's urban jungle, he was a judge of Apple's 2022 Shot on iPhone Challenge, has worked with brands like Louis Vuitton, Visa and Bentley, toured with musicians such as Lauv, and boasts millions of followers across Instagram and TikTok.

PUBLIC SERVICE & LAW

Harnessing the power of the state to improve the world

For supporting lawyers as they support their communities

Renita Sophia Crasta

CO-PRESIDENT, SINGAPORE CORPORATE COUNSEL ASSOCIATION

Aside from her day job as a leading real estate lawyer, Renita Sophia Crasta is co-president of the Singapore Corporate Counsel Association, a national network of 3,500 in-house lawyers that connects members with the community and each other. She also helped launch the Pro Bono Initiative, in which lawyers volunteer their services, and has worked extensively with women, elderly people and marginalised workers.

REAL ESTATE & HOSPITALITY

▶ How to do property properly

↑ For helping people navigate the property market

Rhonda Wong

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, OHMYHOME

Proptech company Ohmyhome makes it easier for home searchers to reach homeowners directly to buy or rent, as well as connecting them with services including renovations and mortgages. Co-founded by Rhonda Wong and her sister Race, it became the first Singapore company to be listed on Nasdaq in 2023. It has also expanded to Malaysia and the Philippines, and facilitated more than 11,000 property transactions.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

▶ Solving society's problems without needing to provide handouts

→ For providing clean and safe spaces to breastfeed on the go

Vivian Lee

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, GO!MAMA

There is a shortage of safe, clean, private spaces for mothers to breastfeed their children in Singapore. With her co-founder Eunice Lim, Vivian Lee is tackling this issue with Go!Mama, Singapore's first network of lactation pods for breastfeeding mothers. Launched in 2021, the company has grown its portfolio from a pilot of five pods to being present at workspaces across the city-state, with plans to enter transit stations, learning institutions and healthcare facilities.

↑ For reminding us of the power of community

Grace Ann Chua

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, FRIENDZONE

Taking that college dormitory spirit into neighbourhoods everywhere, Friendzone co-founder and CEO Grace Ann Chua reminds us that our neighbours can loan us tools, give us lifts and split that cake we can't finish ourselves—like our college friends did. By developing workshops and peer support networks, and hosting meetups in diverse communities, her organisation is helping people form meaningful friendships with their neighbours.

→ For turning coffee into a vehicle for social good

Lim Wei Jie

CO-FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR, FOREWORD COFFEE ROASTERS

Lim Wei Jie’s Foreword Coffee Roasters operates its own coffee shops and offers companies a “barista-as-a-service” programme for their in-house cafes, using this as an opportunity to provide employment to people with autism, cerebral palsy, deafness and mental health needs. The company was awarded B Corp status in 2022 for its high social and environmental impact, which include regional sourcing of coffee beans and disability-inclusive practices.

SPORTS

New heroes of the track, field, court and pitch

→ For breaking powerlifting barriers

Farhanna Farid

POWERLIFTER

Three-time world and six-time Asian record breaker Farhanna Farid was the first Singaporean to win gold in an international powerlifting competition in the women's open category. The former pharmacist also coaches other powerlifters through CoachbyMarc and is an executive committee member of Powerlifting Singapore, where she works tirelessly to gather more financial support for athletes and visibility for the sport.

SUSTAINABILITY

The eco-heroes protecting the planet through innovation

Woo Qiyun

FOUNDER, THE WEIRD AND WILD

Climate activist Woo Qiyun is the brains behind the Instagram account @TheWeirdandWild, a repository of quirky doodles and infographics that showcases complex climate issues in an engaging, non-intimidating way. In 2022, she addressed the impact of youth activism at Cop27, and had her illustration on the SG Green Plan adorn pins and given out at the Singapore Pavilion at the global event. She is a sustainability consultant at AI-driven decarbonisation consultancy Unravel Carbon.

↓ For breaking down complex climate issues into shareable content

↑ For turning the tide on marine pollution

Mathilda D'Silva

FOUNDER AND CEO, OCEAN PURPOSE PROJECT

Ocean Purpose Project (OPP) is dedicated to driving ocean conservation and plastic pollution prevention using a mix of deep technology and nature-based solutions. CEO Mathilda D'Silva founded the social enterprise after her own experience of becoming sick because of marine pollution. OPP has worked with a floating fish farm to filter out toxins in Singapore waters, and is aiming to create the world's first unit that converts plastic waste into hydrogen.

↑ For saving Singapore's seas

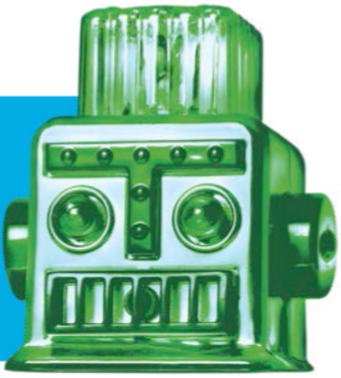
Sam Shu Qin

CO-FOUNDER, OUR SINGAPORE REEFS

Marine scientist Sam Shu Qin co-founded Our Singapore Reefs in 2017 to create greater awareness of and inspire action towards marine conservation. The organisation has conducted more than 40 dives in Singapore's waters to remove marine waste and holds monthly talks for schools and corporations. It also previously embarked on a three-year collaboration with the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore to promote the importance of the country's biodiversity.

TECHNOLOGY

The people driving tech disruption



↑ For pioneering localised voice AI for Asia

Jennifer Zhang

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, WIZ.AI

Jennifer Zhang's voice AI platform Wiz.AI delivers automated customer interactions in Asian languages using accents so accurate that 95 percent of users do not know they are talking to a machine. In 2022, it was named as a World Economic Forum Technology Pioneer and raised $30 million in a funding round. In 2023, Wiz.AI launched TalkGPT, a ChatGPT-powered solution for customer engagement campaigns.

→ For supercharging marketing copy with AI

Joshua Wong

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, HYPOTENUSE AI

Joshua Wong's Hypotenuse AI is providing marketers and copywriters with fast, accurate copy. The first AI content generator specifically designed to write marketing materials such as product descriptions and social media posts, it requires just a few keywords, and is constantly updated from the internet to ensure information is timely. It has already acquired more than 500,000 users globally.

→ For driving Singapore's AI development

Chng Zhenzhi

DIRECTOR, NATIONAL AI OFFICE

The founding director of Singapore's National AI Office, Chng Zhenzhi has been driving the development, deployment and funding of AI projects to meet smart nation goals in sectors such as healthcare, finance and education.

In 2022, the Singapore government signed its first public-private AI partnership with a global technology company, engaging Google Cloud for skills training, research and development, and signing a memorandum of understanding with Israel to cooperate in AI development.

← For democratising mentorship

Felix Lee

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, ADPLIST

Felix Lee gives people the opportunity to learn from the experts. His company ADPList opens up career opportunities by allowing people to connect with mentors from companies like Airbnb and Netflix, and get free advice. Established in 2021, ADPList has so far signed up more than 15,000 mentors and seen mentorship sessions held across over 140 countries.

→ For levelling the playing field for women at work

Sabrina Ho

FOUNDER AND CEO, HALF THE SKY

Once mistaken for a translator at a business meeting, this director of an executive search company has made it her raison d'être to advance gender equality in the workplace. Since Sabrina Ho had her first child in 2022, her intimate knowledge of a working mother's responsibilities has enabled her to refine the way her platform supports women through coaching, training, networking and access to equitable job opportunities. The platform has partners in the likes of Microsoft and IBM.

← For enhancing safety where it is needed the most

Udayagiri Vishnu Saran

FOUNDER AND CEO, INVIGILO TECHNOLOGIES

Video analytics, big data, neuro-linguistic programming—welcome to Invigilo Technologies, a company founded by Udayagiri Vishnu Saran that uses AI and the IoT to make workplaces safer. With a name that means "watch over" in Latin, Invigilo can alert companies in industries such as construction, transport and manufacturing to potential accidents. Its clients include Singapore's Land Transit Authority, ST Engineering and port operator PSA International.

PHOTOGRAPHY GUTTER CREDIT

← For improving internet connectivity with space lasers

Rohit Jha

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, TRANSCELESTIAL

Rohit Jha, Transcelestial's co-founder and CEO, believes digital connectivity is a human right—but also knows much of humanity struggles to get it. His company's device Centauri works like fibre optics in space, delivering wire-free, high-speed internet through laser beams. The shoebox-sized devices are available across South and Southeast Asia. The company raised $10 million in early 2023, bringing its total funding to $24 million.

THE ARTS

Exploring new frontiers in culture and artistic expression

→ For being a violin prodigy

Chloe Chua

VIOLINST

The winner of world-leading competitions such as the 2018 Yehudi Menuhin International Competition for Young Violinists and 24th Andrea Postacchini International Violin Competition, teenage violinist Chloe Chua has performed with the China Philharmonic Orchestra and the Kammerorchester Basel Chamber Orchestra. She is also the artist-in-residence at the Singapore Symphony Orchestra for its 2022/23 season. In March 2023, she released her debut recording of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* on the music label Pentatone.

↑ For putting Asian characters at the centre

Kyla Zhao

AUTHOR

Kyla Zhao started writing during the pandemic while still a student at Stanford University, stung by anti-Asian racism and wanting to pen fiction with Asian characters in joyful central roles. The result was her debut novel *The Fraud Squad*, about a working class woman's adventures in Singaporean high society, which was published by Penguin Random House in 2023 and has been featured in media including Good Morning America, *Vogue* and *Elle*.

TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS

Moving the region

→ For creating an ecosystem where car mobility is shared

Johnson Lim

CO-FOUNDER AND CMO, GETGO

GetGo unlocks mobility at bargain prices. The company provides car rental and sharing by the hour, with a pay-as-you-go pricing model. Johnson Lim's marketing strategy amassed 200,000 users within two years, and more than 150,000 bookings a month. In 2023, GetGo raised $14.9 million. It aims to introduce 10,000 electric and hybrid vehicles by 2030.

←For making mobility accessible and equitable

Jonathan Chua

REGIONAL GENERAL MANAGER, TADA MOBILITY SINGAPORE

Ride-hailing business Tada, where Jonathan Chua is regional general manager, has committed to delivering stable prices for commuters—without taking a cut from drivers. It does this by leveraging big data as currency. With the consent of its drivers, Tada sells data such as driver location, distance and commuter behaviour to third parties, while drivers receive equity tokens in the form of MVL coins, which can be used to pay for services. Tada is expanding to Bangkok in Q3 2023.

WELLNESS

Helping a fitness-conscious generation nurture body, mind and soul

←For wellness that works

Roy Ang

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, EVO COMMERCE

Evo Commerce, co-founded by Roy Ang, sells its own scientifically backed wellness products direct to consumers. It is best known for its anti-hangover products BounceBack and Hangly, as well as its Mantou anti-hair loss products and its Stryv beauty and haircare products. It serves about 50,000 customers and counts GSR Ventures, East Ventures and 33 Capital as investors.

Tatler Gen.T

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Regional Senior Editor Chong Seow Wei

Regional Gen.T Editors

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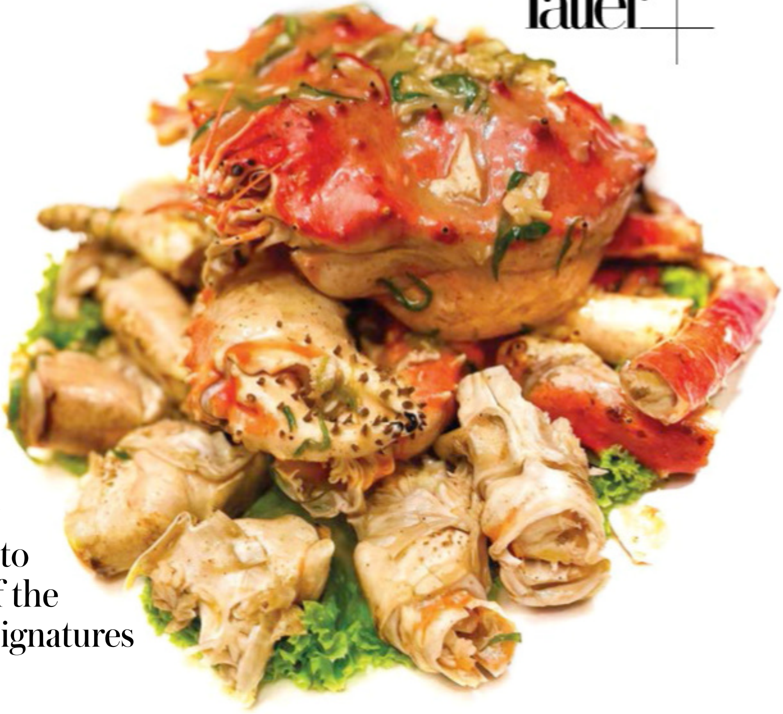


The Finest Catch

Best known as the originator of the black pepper crab dish, Long Beach continues to show its prowess in whipping up some of the most tantalising and innovative seafood signatures that keep patrons coming back for more

Those who appreciate seafood know that there is really just one name to turn to for the freshest, finest catch in town: Long Beach, a household name in Singapore for over four decades that is known for being the first restaurant here to bring in premium live seafood from overseas sources. Experience in the business isn't enough, of course—Long Beach has upheld its reputation as an established restaurant chain by constantly refreshing its offerings and upgrading the dining experience it provides, all while consistently impressing with signature dishes that have delighted diners through the years.

One of those popular signatures is, of course, the black pepper crab. Loyal patrons would already know this pride-and-joy dish by heart—and while it may be available at many restaurants in Singapore, it never tastes the way it does here. The time-honoured dish originated from Long Beach's very kitchens in 1982 and has remained a national favourite ever since.

There is plenty more to savour at Long Beach though—other live seafood choices include the classic white pepper Alaskan king crab and Australian lobster, as well as razor clams and geoduck to complete an indulgent and sumptuous feast from the sea. On top of these, new and seasonal dishes are added to the menu from time to time, curated specially to excite and surprise.

The must-tries besides black pepper crab? The Alaskan king crab, which is unrivalled in size and packed with rich flavour that is elevated by the fragrance and mildly spicy kick of white pepper when prepared in the local white pepper style. Add Australian lobster to your order too, and enjoy its delicate and succulent flesh in one of two (or both!) ways: raw as sashimi, or cooked lightly in a steamboat filled with a fragrant superior broth.

Keeping seafood at its freshest right up to the point it is ready to be prepped and served is key to its top-notch taste and quality. Long Beach has mastered this aspect, maintaining its daily catch in optimal conditions with climate-controlled tanks. The company also ensures that its seafood is sustainably sourced and responsibly transported to its kitchens.

With four branches across the island—at Dempsey, IMM, Robertson Quay and East Coast Seafood Centre—Long Beach offers diners a choice of distinctly different dining ambiences and experiences. What remain constant, however, are the same fresh flavours and exceptional culinary skills that promise to leave your taste buds satiated and hankering for more.

Long Beach @ Dempsey
25 Dempsey Road, tel: 6323 2222

Long Beach @ Robertson Quay
01-14 The Quayside, tel: 6336 3636

Long Beach UDMC
01-04 East Coast Seafood Centre,
tel: 6448 3636

Long Beach IMM
03-07 IMM, tel: 6566 9933

longbeachseafood.com.sg
@longbeachseafood

IMAGES **LONG BEACH**

Professional surfer Flora Christin Butarbutar. **Opposite page:** Banyan Tree's Buahan resort in Bali

IMAGE FLORA CHRISTIN BUTARBUTAR (SURFER)

Tatler
URES

Dean Ho on harnessing AI for personalised healthcare, the activists fighting for their causes from a surfboard, and a new generation of hoteliers deviating from traditional models

Fendi suit, shoes,
stylist's own sweater

CALLING DR AI

With healthcare costs rising globally, scientist Dean Ho is focusing his efforts on harnessing artificial intelligence for personalised healthcare—and not only to save lives but to also biohack one's way to staying healthy for longer *By Karen Tee*

Photography by Darren Gabriel Leow
Styling by Tok Wei Lun

In a year where artificial intelligence (AI) is *the* buzzword, many of us have started experimenting with generative AI, working out how we can use it as a tool to increase productivity. For instance, generative text tools such as ChatGPT might provide the nudge needed to get one's creative juices flowing, while text-to-image platforms such as Midjourney and Dall-E produce pictures in a fraction of the time needed to create one from scratch.

But Dean Ho, the recipient of the Tatler Hero Award in 2022, is already light years ahead in envisioning how AI could be used for a greater purpose. In his view, the way an individual engages with and prompts these programs could potentially be used to track their cognitive capabilities, creating opportunities for early intervention and, if necessary, treatment for cognitive decline.

"Beyond people using it to write their homework for them and stuff like that, I think ChatGPT could be used as a diagnostic where, over time, when people engage with chat tools, you can monitor symptoms such as cognitive decline," says the director of the Institute for Digital Medicine (WisDM) and the N.1 Institute for Health. "When used with discipline and by following certain best practices, things such as ChatGPT are potentially huge enablers."

Indeed, he has made it his calling to do more with AI in digital medicine. The provost's chair professor and head of the Department of Biomedical Engineering at the National University of Singapore's College of Design and Engineering, who is also a 2019 Gen.T honouree, has been harnessing this technology to innovate personalised healthcare treatments in fields ranging from oncology to digital therapeutics and infectious diseases.

Ho moved to Singapore from the US in 2018 to helm the N.1 Institute for Health. Among other innovations, the team, in collaboration with doctors from the National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS), has developed Curate.AI, a tool that identifies and better allows doctors to provide personalised doses of medication for individual patients. "By using our platform Curate.AI, instead of defaulting patients to solely receiving the highest drug doses, we place the individual on a regimen that is within a safe range to strategically sample a little bit of data. We then use AI on this data to dynamically guide their drug dosing and medical care," Ho says. Curate.AI's treatment programme is currently undergoing human clinical trials.

What is groundbreaking about this research is that instead of relying on big data gathered from large numbers of people to train traditional AI algorithms, the platform is able to simply use just an individual's own information to create a dynamic personalised treatment plan. Such treatments could include using different medicines to what is traditionally used, a combination of medications that was previously not considered, or even a lower dose than what is currently being used.

The results have been promising and could herald a disruption in the way many diseases, from cancer to liver disease and more, are treated. The team is currently collaborating on a trial with NCIS on how to use the technology to design optimal combinations of drugs for different types of brain cancer. (During the pandemic, Ho also worked to develop novel treatments for Covid-19 with the help of IDentif.AI, another platform the team created.)

Patients are already benefitting from this research. In one published paper, a patient with stage four prostate cancer received a new lease of life thanks to an AI-generated treatment plan. "We were able to use Curate to continually adjust doses to optimise the patient's response to treatment and the outcome was good," Ho says. "This is what I call interventional AI—a true AI-guided treatment."

In what is proving to be a watershed year for AI—the topic continues to be hotly debated across multiple industries—Ho observes that this public attention has led to a greater acceptance of the idea of the use of AI in the healthcare sector. "The evidence is there, so I think people are now more receptive not only to the technology, but also everything that surrounds it, including how to test it, how to validate it and how to build data to drive it," he says.

In a big coup for the team, this pioneering work on dynamic dosing has been recognised by the influential American Society of Clinical Oncology. This month, Ho is due to travel to the US to give a presentation at the organisation's annual meeting, where only the most impactful breakthroughs are given airtime."It's a testament to the team that in a field such as medicine, where it's so hard to have these huge changes in how things are done, this is materialising at the venue where the global standards of practice are defined," he says.

This mission to revolutionise healthcare is also deeply personal. One fateful morning in 2018, after Ho had seen his kids off on the school bus, he returned home to find his wife Sarah Ahn, a neuroscientist, lying face up on the bathroom floor. She was conscious but unable to move. To add to the discombobulation of the moment,

Loro Piana jacket, T-shirt, trousers, **Onitsuka Tiger** shoes, Ho's own accessories

Hermès sweater;
D&A Jewellery
Infinity rings,
Sahara bracelet

“We were able to use Curate to continually adjust doses to optimise the patient’s response to treatment and the outcome was good. This is what I call interventional AI—a true AI-guided treatment”

Prada sweater

the family was so new to Singapore, he had to Google the number for emergency services.

In a series of events that unfolded rapidly over the next 24 hours, doctors discovered she had a brain tumour and had to undergo an operation to remove it the following morning. "I remember how dejected I was, [wondering] if I would have my wife for another two years, if my kids would be without a mum. It took a whole community to scrape us off the ground," he says. The memories remain so fresh, he can recall the tiniest details, from his wife's reaction to seeing images of her own brain scan to him bringing his kids to Burger King for a meal on the day of her collapse.

She pulled through, but the tumour turned out to be malignant, meaning that she has to undergo regular scans to ensure a clean bill of health; last year, she had her fourth-year image taken just a few days before attending the annual Tatler Ball with Ho. "It's still very hard for her—she suffers from debilitating headaches—but she has elected to find a way through with a smile on her face and to be there for the family," he says. "I think she has exceeded all expectations for someone with a malignant brain tumour."

Witnessing Ahn's daily fight to lead a normal life has given Ho an even greater impetus to play a role in leading healthcare innovation to ensure that everyone gets a fair shot at effective and affordable treatment. It has also offered insights into why empathy is important when designing solutions. "[My wife's experience] has compelled me to understand that technology alone is not going to solve healthcare challenges. It's about understanding the user—what is it like for them to even show up to the breakfast table. We have to have a deeper appreciation for what they go through in order to create solutions that they are willing or able to use. That matters," he says.

Ho is exploring new frontiers in treatment by harnessing AI in video game digital therapy for cognitive training to maintain or improve brain function. "We want to generate evidence that when you play certain games, you can augment or optimise cognitive performance," says Ho, sharing that his team is already beginning to design these games. "We like the fact that people can remotely do cognitive training, which really makes healthcare more decentralised, as healthcare expenditure is escalating substantially and accessibility is being reduced."

Such digital therapies form the backbone of his upcoming book, *Medicine Without Meds,* which he co-authored with two teammates, Yoann Sapanel and Agata Blasiak. He emphasises that the publication, slated to launch in October, is not a medical textbook, but rather "a blueprint for how to accelerate innovation to patients faster and safely". He expounds: "It essentially informs others how we did what we did as an organisation to bring innovation to the user faster and we hope it will resonate beyond healthcare." To give back to the community, 100 per cent of author royalties will be donated to the WisDM Patient Impact Fund and channelled to needy causes, he adds.

Up next, Ho is planning to turn his focus to biohacking, one of the most popular wellness trends that involves making changes to one's diet, exercise and mindfulness practices to improve brain function and stave off the negative effects of ageing. Ho himself is a fitness junkie who spends almost two hours at the gym daily, so it is no surprise that this has piqued his curiosity.

His goal is to figure out how to biohack in a scientific manner to produce measurable results. His team is currently working with a US company to extract compounds from food that contain known antioxidants, such as goji berry, to improve liver health. Pre-clinical data are already showing positive outcomes, he says. "Even if you were to eat goji berries every day, that alone is not powerful enough. You would need to isolate the ingredients in the right combinations, and that is where AI can help," he explains.

Ultimately, Ho aims to harness the power of AI to uncover optimal combinations of fitness and wellness practices, such as ice baths, and nutritional intake to keep individuals at peak health and productivity for as long as possible. He says: "Ageing is a freight train and if we do this by trial and error, it's like firing a rubber band against that train. No one ages backwards, but if you want to have a measurable impact on health decline, optimisation is the only way."

GROOMING **GIN TAN USING KEUNE HAIRCOSMETICS AND YSL BEAUTY**
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT **REX TEO** STYLING ASSISTANT **CRYSTAL LIM**

BRAIN JUICE

Dean Ho is a firm believer in collaborations to accelerate technological advancement for the greater good. Here, some of the projects he has embarked on with fellow Gen.T honourees

MENTAL HEALTH

Together with fellow 2019 Gen.T honouree Matt Oon, the founder of Acceset, a digital peer support platform that facilitates interpersonal sharing, Ho embarked on a trial to show that anonymised and moderated digital peer support resonates among its users (read: the platform's peer support system works). A paper on this was recently published in the *JMIR Mental Health* journal.

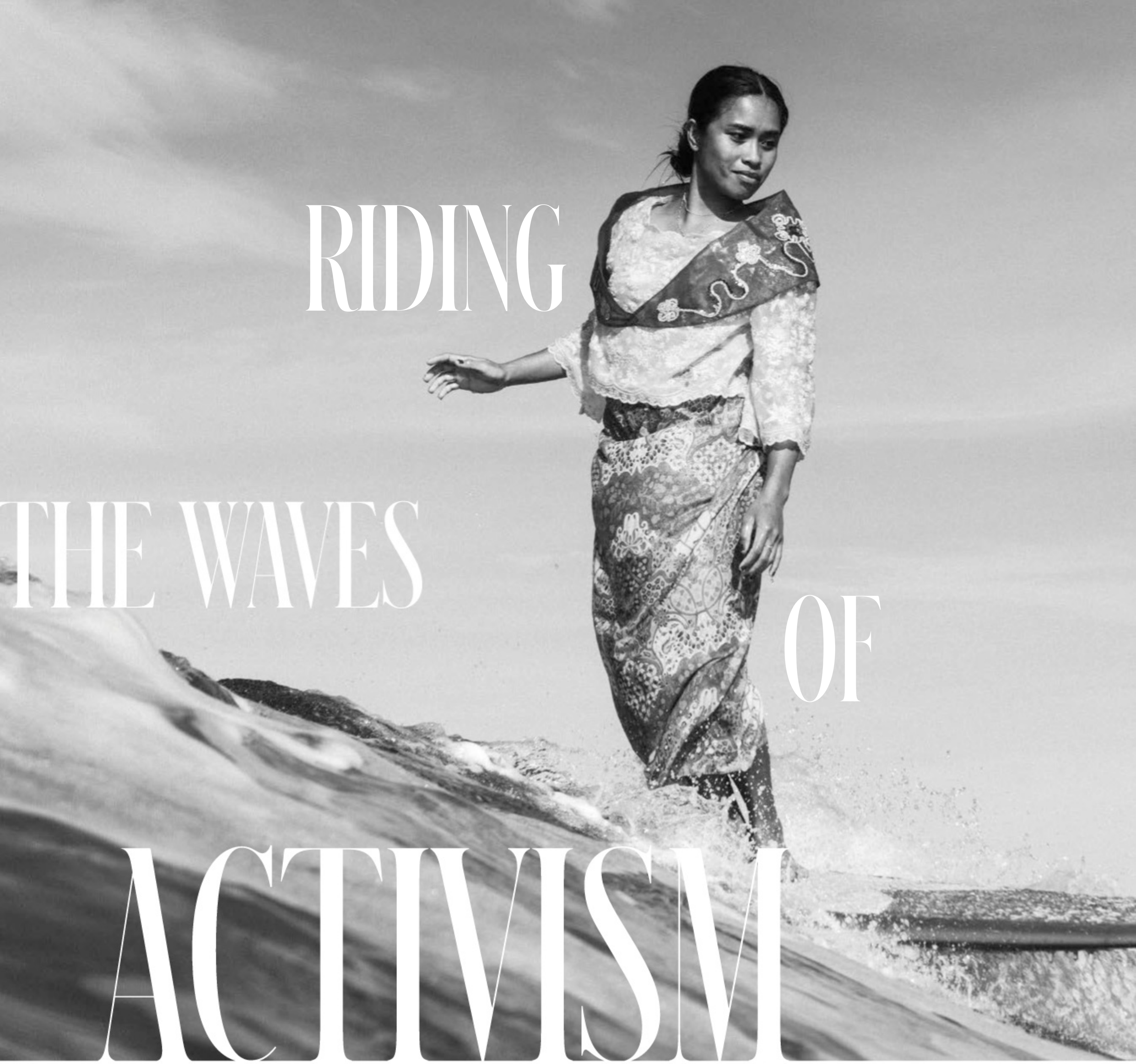
FOOD SECURITY

Ho is working with another fellow 2019 Gen.T honouree, Benjamin Swan, the founder of Beco Ventures and co-founder of Sustenir, to innovate ways to optimise food yield without sacrificing nutritional value by using AI to generate combinations of growth recipes to maximise crop output.

PUBLISHING

Ho's upcoming book *Medicine Without Meds* aims to offer a diverse range of perspectives on the up-and-coming field of digital therapeutics. Hence, he has enlisted individuals from the *Tatler* community, including 2017 Gen.T honouree Pocket Sun, a venture capitalist (VC) and the co-founder and managing partner of VC firm SoGal Ventures, 2019 Gen.T honouree Adrian Ang, co-founder and CEO of medtech company Aevice Health, and Acceset's Oon, to contribute insights to the book.

RIDING THE WAVES OF ACTIVISM



From Hawaiians battling for their sovereignty to long-haired hippies safeguarding the planet, surfers have been politically active for centuries. Now, young surfers in Asia are fighting for a better future *By Salomé Grouard*

Tatler spoke to surfers from across the region about how an interest in surfing is leading the charge on issues as diverse as body positivity and challenging postcolonial legacies.

PHILIPPINES

ARCHIE GEOTINA

Anticolonialism

During the Covid-19 pandemic, with the borders closed and the beach emptied of tourists, the surfing community on the island of Siargao suffered. Siargao-based surfer and artist Archie Geotina's

IMAGE ARCHIE GEOTINA (PARAJES)

Filipina surfer Maricel Parajes rides waves wearing a Maria Clara dress, a traditional Philippine garment, for Archie Geotina's Pearls project. **Below:** Flora Christin Butarbutar holding one of her longboards

friends, professional surfers and sisters Ikit and Aping Agudo, shared with him their worries about their income. "I told them, I'm not a businessman, I can't help you make money," he tells *Tatler*. "But I can try to create something."

It was the perfect opportunity for Geotina to shift the focus onto the local surfing community, a group of people who are usually underrepresented on Siargao's beaches, he says. "People think that our waves are only surfed by foreigners and that locals just stay on the beach taking care of businesses to serve tourists. That's a really imperialist vision that continues to negatively impact our people.

"Surfing has a deep history of white-washing and racism. I really wanted to take the opportunity to show our pride: I wanted to empower the brownness in us, as well as the femininity of our culture."

To challenge the postcolonial narratives of what it means to be Filipino, Geotina dubbed his project Pearls, a reference to a line from the national anthem, "Perlas ng silangan", that translates to "pearl of the east".

With the help of surf photographers Bren Fuentes and Jose Mirasol, Geotina captured his friends riding the waves while wearing the traditional Filipiniana style of dresses. He included both cis and trans women in his project as a way of highlighting the role Spanish colonialism and Christianity played in the repression of gender diversity in the country. The clothes, Geotina says, have both a metaphorical and physical weight. Soaked in water, the women's ability to surf while wearing them proves both their talent and resilience. The decision to produce them in black and white, he adds, adds to their timelessness.

The Pearls project, which was symbolically released on Philippines Independence Day in 2021, quickly went viral, generating thousands of likes, shares and comments on social media from both the local and international community. It has also been exhibited outside the Philippines.

After extending the project to feature surfers from Indonesia, Geotina says that Pearls evolved organically into "a project for humanity, transcending the boundaries of myself and my team.

"Never has a project I've done met so much success. It shows how much the people of the Philippines, and of the rest of Asia, need to be included in the global surfing conversation."

INDONESIA

FLORA CHRISTIN

Female empowerment

When 32-year-old Flora Christin Butarbutar—who goes by just Flora—started surfing in Bali in 2016, not only was she one of the

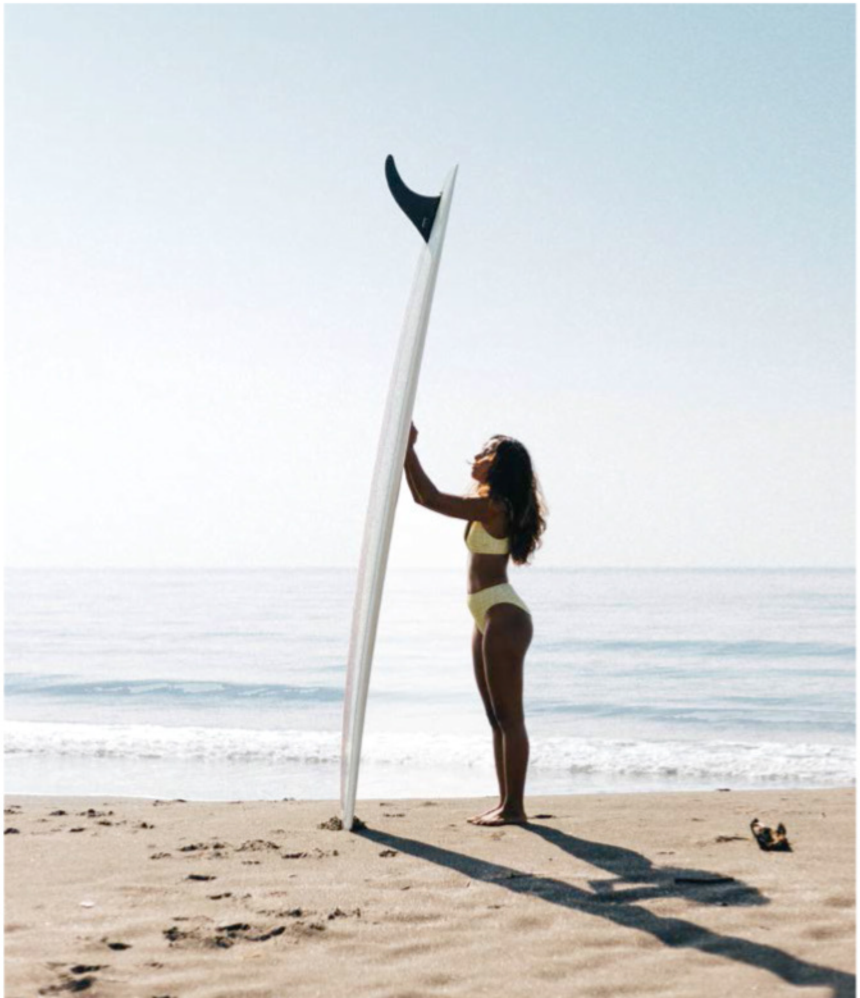


IMAGE **FLORA CHRISTIN**

very few women in the water, she was also the only local one. “People thought surfing was a sport for foreigners, not for locals, let alone a local woman.”

Flora may be a pioneer for Indonesian female surfers—she became the country’s first female competitive longboard surfer in 2017—but her rise has not been without its difficulties. Take, for example, the time she was physically and verbally assaulted by a man who wanted to surf a wave before her.

“Some men think the big waves belong to them ... In general, surfing is a male-dominated sport,” she says. “But I knew I was brought here to break cycles.”

Born in Medan, North Sumatra, Flora says she grew up not feeling like she was a member of her own family: “I was a girl, so I was supposed to go back home right after school to clean the house, cook for my brothers and do the housework.” She is a member of the Batak indigenous group, where traditional gender roles are even stricter than in the rest of Indonesia, she says. Flora’s father died when she was 11, and her mother ran away when she was 17, meaning she had to support her two brothers.

“I was killing myself in Jakarta in an office job I hated,” she says. “So, when my youngest brother turned 18, I called him and said ‘Look, you’re old enough, it’s time for you to take care of yourself because I need to look after me’.”

Flora decided to travel around Asia, and then around Indonesia. Once arrived in Bali, she decided to teach herself surfing, as she didn’t have the resources to pay for an instructor. Her hard work led to spectacular success. In 2017, she was featured on international sports channels and in an Asia-wide beauty campaign for Dove, and podiumed at the Asian Women’s Surf Championships. She also collaborated with numerous photographers, producing images that have built her a huge fan base around the world.

She has also developed female-only surfing programmes, called Flora Retreats, with some of the profits going partially to buy local surfboards for local girls, as well as to making custom-made swimming suits. “They don’t surf in bikinis, so I need to make them long one-pieces with sleeves for example.”

“My main motivation today is to help more Indonesian women reach their dreams,” she says, adding that she wants to both give back to the community and lead by example. “You know, we [Indonesian women] have been brainwashed into thinking that we can’t surf and that our skin can’t be darkened by the sun. But that’s not true, and I want to show them. We’re strong and beautiful.”

> “Because I was surfing in a swimming suit, people felt that it was an invitation to comment on my body. They called me fat, chubby and suggested that I lose some [weight]. It was really hurtful, growing up with that” — TANVI JAGADISH

INDIA

TANVI JAGADISH

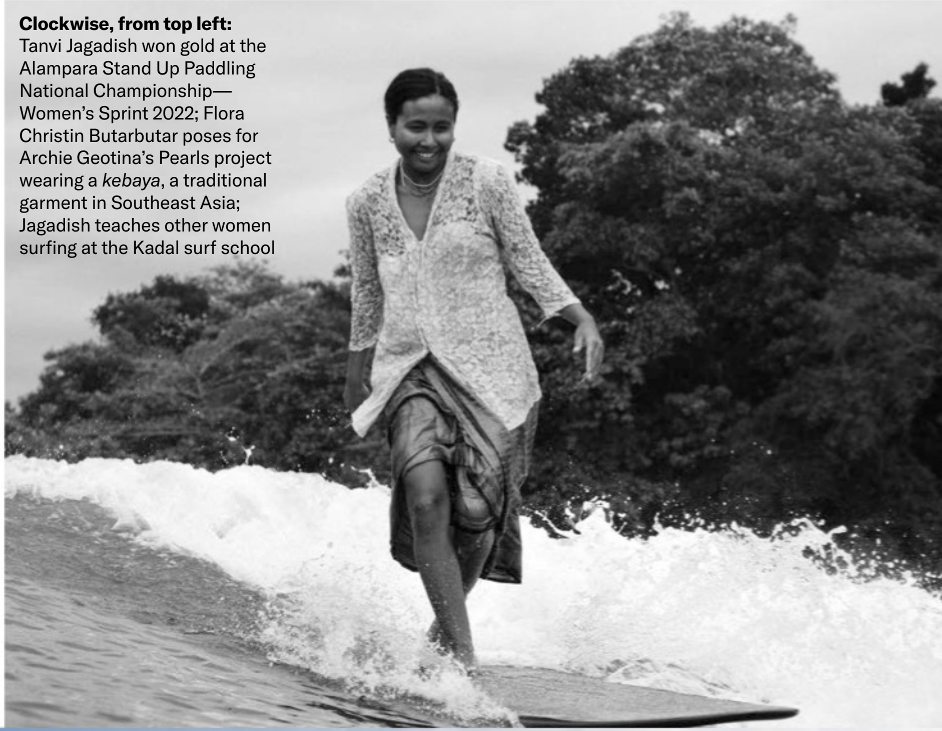
Body positivity

When Tanvi Jagadish’s mother discovered in 2012 that her daughter had been secretly surfing in the sea off Malpe, Karnataka, for three years, she was furious. Not only was she worried about the preteen’s safety—as the sea was perceived as “too dangerous for women”—she was also concerned about the consequences surfing would have on her daughter’s body.

“My mom was really afraid that I would become too muscular, that my hair would become blonder and damaged, and that I would become too dark to attract

IMAGES **ARCHIE GEOTINA (CHRISTIN); TANVI JAGADISH (JAGADISH)**

Clockwise, from top left: Tanvi Jagadish won gold at the Alampara Stand Up Paddling National Championship—Women's Sprint 2022; Flora Christin Butarbutar poses for Archie Geotina's Pearls project wearing a *kebaya*, a traditional garment in Southeast Asia; Jagadish teaches other women surfing at the Kadal surf school



Clockwise, from top left: Darci Liu; keychains made of materials gathered during beach clean-ups; rubbish bins painted and left on remote shores in Hainan; Liu at a beach clean-up

a husband," Jagadish tells *Tatler*. "She was actually so angry that I [was forbidden from going out] for a full year."

On her journey to becoming India's sole female representative in the stand-up paddle (SUP) World Cup, and a seven-time national champion—as well as to being comfortable with her body—23-year-old Jagadish had to fight against a lot of societal and beauty norms. She describes herself as a "chubby and muscular kid", and explains that growing up while navigating the surfing scene took an emotional toll.

"I grew up being body-shamed a lot," she says. "I always was the only woman in the sea, and because I was surfing in a swimming suit, people felt that it was an invitation to comment on my body. They called me fat, chubby and suggested that I lose some [weight]. It was really hurtful, growing up with that."

Her struggles were compounded by not having a role model to look up to in the international surfing community. "I used to feel very confused and lost because most of the foreign surfers I would look up to were really skinny and fit. Also, there was very little dark skin representation."

Historically, surfing was practised by men and women of all shapes, sizes, ages and societal backgrounds in premodern Hawaii and Polynesia, but the modern pop culture image of the sport is very homogenous: in contemporary movies, commercials and books, surfers are usually young, white, heterosexual men from Southern California or Australia. The body positivity movement within the surfing community is improving slowly, and Jagadish has taken the lead in her hometown. With one of her best friends, Rohan R Suvarna, she founded the Kadal surf school, a place meant to demystify the ocean, teach surfing, and provide the support system that Jagadish was missing when she started out, as well as be a safe space that can "show all the other little girls that they can surf and be who they want to be", Jagadish says.

Today, she finally feels supported by her family, friends and community, who help her secure the necessary technical and economic resources to allow her to thrive in international SUP competitions. And now she hopes other young women from her country who don't fit the stereotypical "surfer vibe" can feel similarly welcome: "The surfing community can be so beautiful and supportive—I want to bring that to India."

CHINA

DARCI LIU

Sustainability

For Darci Liu, being known as "China's first pro-surfer" wasn't meaningful if it wasn't associated with her conservation work. "Everyone has their own superpower," she tells *Tatler*. "My gift is my motivation to impact society in a positive way."

The woman who would later change surfing history in China was born into a traditional family in Hubei, in the centre of the country. She had never seen the ocean, nor did she know how to swim before she was introduced to surfing in 2007 at 19 in the island province of Hainan. It was love at first sight—or at first wave—and she decided to move to the island the same year.

IMAGES DARCI LIU

But in 2015, after cresting with the world's surfing elite and creating a path for China's future surfers, Liu abruptly retired from the sport. Instead, she decided to focus her energy on raising awareness about climate change and beach pollution in the surfing community of Hainan and beyond.

"Surfing was a very young sport in China," she explains. "It was becoming popular very quickly, and that was as exciting as it was frightening." By that, she means that the booming industry attracted a lot of investors "who did not necessarily care about surfing", she says. "They wanted to make quick money and did not care about their impact on the environment."

Liu took it upon herself to show how to keep the sport sustainable; after all, she says, giving back to nature is a big part of surf culture.

She has organised beach clean-ups since 2009, but she took it to the next level in 2022 by creating the Clean Island Movement. Once a month, Liu organises gatherings where people can come together and collect rubbish from the island's more remote shores. She has also stationed specially painted rubbish bins on these beaches to encourage surfers and visitors to properly dispose of their waste. And as well as the monthly public events, she arranges weekly clean-ups to empty those bins, in an attempt to keep the shores as clean as possible.

"These events were quite unusual in China, and became popular quickly," she says. "Many tourists choose to spend their vacations in Hainan cleaning beaches with us. They take pictures, post them on social media, and spread the world. This is the beauty of our community."

The rubbish they collect from these beaches is transformed into keychains that Liu distributes to volunteers; it's a 360 initiative, she says.

While a deep ecological dichotomy exists in the surfing community—being deeply connected to nature while travelling the world to surf new waves and therefore leaving a large carbon footprint—sustainability has been a growing concern in China. With her company Island life, Liu is hoping to change the norm: "We organise surf competitions that are completely zero waste; we think of everything, from dispensing water for water bottles to reusing all the banners we display."

PLEASE LEAVE NOTHING BUT YOUR
CLEAN ISLAND MOVEMENT

Liu has inspired a whole generation of surfers to protect the environment, and her initiatives are such a success that her work has been recognised by the local government. It's a first step, she says, and it's motivating her to take it to the next level. "I'm like a gardener," she says. "I put seeds in people's minds and water them until they grow and bloom into a beautiful garden."

DARING TO BE DIFFERENT

A new generation of hoteliers are deviating from traditional hotel models, opting instead for spaces and properties that are deeply personal and that encourage depth of connection *By Coco Marett*

Big Tiny's collection of tiny homes allows visitors to stay comfortably in unique locales. **Inset, from left:** Big Tiny founders Jeff Yeo, Dave Ng and Adrian Chia

BIG TINY

SMALL BUT MIGHTY

Jeff Yeo, Dave Ng and Adrian Chia

You've seen them all over TikTok and Instagram—cosy, compact "tiny homes", often fashioned from trailers and shipping containers. But what started as a creative solution to rising real estate costs around the world has quickly become a key disruptor in the way people travel.

Travellers have fallen under the tiny home spell, as these minimalist accommodations often allow them to stay comfortably in locations where they otherwise would never have the chance to—be it on a secluded hilltop in rural New Zealand or at the heart of an Australian rainforest.

In 2017, friends-turned-business partners Jeff Yeo, Dave Ng and Adrian Chia founded Tiny Away, a collection of tiny home holiday rentals. They started in Australia and New Zealand, where they now have more than 200 properties.

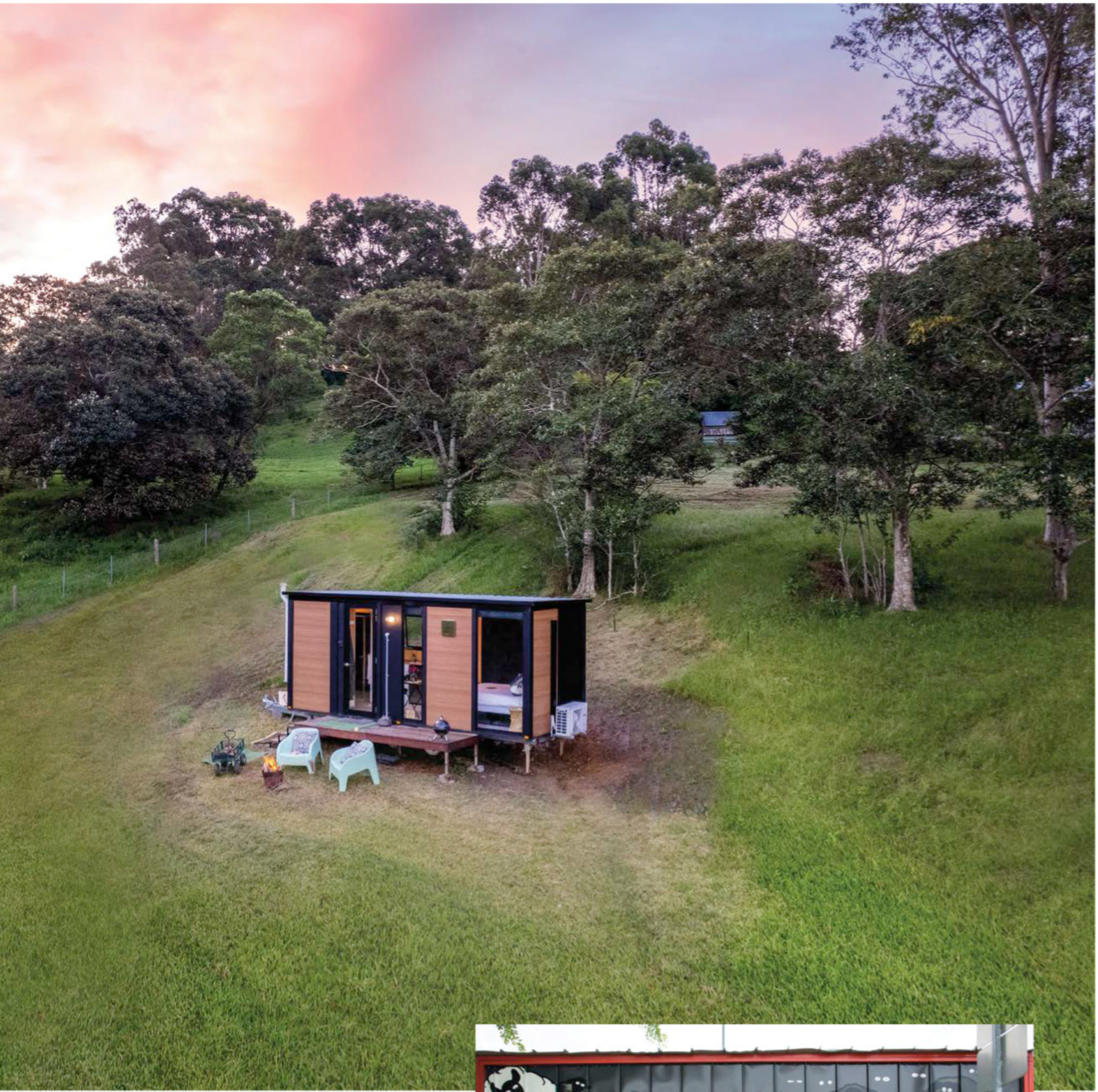
"We discovered that rural landowners had these large plots of land but were utilising only 20 to 30 per cent of it. The rest is just sitting there, wasted," says Yeo, who adds that the trio saw an opportunity to introduce a sustainable secondary source of income. "We pitched the idea to them to host our tiny homes on their unused land, so they get some rental revenue from this tourism business."

They also partner with local farmers to curate exclusive experiences, like horseback riding, fruit picking and private wine tours.

Recently, the trio brought the concept to Asia under the name Big Tiny, with tiny houses in Malaysia, Taiwan and, most recently, on Lazarus Island in Singapore.

Adopting a kind of plug-and-play model, the pint-sized properties are fashioned from recyclable materials, designed to be assembled in three hours, and built on trailer bases. "That gives us the flexibility to move tiny houses according to seasons, and test locations [to] see what works best for views or accessibility," says Yeo. "Hotels can impact the environment quite heavily, so we wanted to minimise the impact of tourism in these natural settings."

The tiny homes are also mostly run on solar power to provide



comforts like electricity, hot water and air conditioning, while waste is composted, collected and treated with enzymes to use as fertiliser.

"There was a report that found if you live in a tiny house, you can reduce your carbon footprint by about 48 per cent," says Yeo, who says he hopes that guests will be inspired by the joy of living minimally among nature. "It's a very eco-friendly and sustainable way of getting out and seeing the world."

IMAGE **KENS PHOTOGRAPHY (BIG TINY FOUNDERS)**

SEA SEA

RIDING THE WAVE

George Gorrow & Cisco Tschurtschenthaler

Sleepy, sun-kissed surf towns hold a special place in George Gorrow's heart. From the age of 11, he braved the waves of Crescent Head—an Australian town on the Tasman Sea coast halfway between Sydney and Byron Bay that Gorrow describes as "a classic Aussie beach village with a laid-back, retro vibe and a deeply entrenched surf culture".

It's also here that he and his wife, Cisco Tschurtschenthaler, will be opening Sea Sea, a "Seventies surf-inspired boutique hotel" with just 24 rooms, immersed in the area's native landscape and just a few streets away from what Gorrow swears is one of "Australia's best surf spots".

"My dad is great surfer, and this was always a key spot for him to take us," says Gorrow, who co-founded the cult denim brand Ksubi in Sydney's northern beaches in 2000, before leaving the label in 2012. "The overall vibe [of Sea Sea] is inspired by times spent travelling the coast of Australia, surfing [and staying at] all the little family-run beachside stays."

It's a sweet full-circle moment for Gorrow, who has spent the last decade living on the islands of Indonesia. It was in Bali that Gorrow and Tschurtschenthaler made their mark as hoteliers when they opened The Slow in 2016, a tropical brutalist escape in the heart of Canggu.

More than just a hotel, The Slow cultivated a sense of community with its thoughtfully curated culture calendar; and now they are bringing that concept home with Sea Sea. The hotel's clubhouse and project space, says Gorrow, will host "a revolving programme of art exhibitions, music performances and culinary events" featuring both local and international talent.

The talent pool behind Sea Sea is impressive, too. The couple partnered with Claus Sendlinger, the founder of Design Hotels, a curated hub of design-driven boutique hotels, to transform a cluster of classic buildings—1970s

From top: Sea Sea founders Cisco Tschurtschenthaler and George Gorrow; Else Kuala Lumpur founders Justin Chen and Javier Perez. **Opposite page, clockwise from top left:** Gorrow continues the family tradition with his son; snapshots of Sea Sea's Seventies aesthetic

> "Brands that drive emotional responses will be the ones that last through seasons and trends"
>
> — HO RENYUNG

brick with high-pitched roofs, long rafters and skylights—into the hotel.

"The initial concept for the project is an Australian Seventies surf club look, but recently we have started to let the project start forming its own style, which is for me much more interesting," Gorrow says. "[I believe in] letting things lead you on a path and hopefully in the end it will have a style and personality of its own."

There will also be an in-house radio station curated by independent channel Reverberation, plus food and drink by the likes of Sydney's revered P&V Wine & Liquor Merchants and Antonello Arzedi, who has worked with Sydney's famed Icebergs Dining Room and Bar.

ELSE KUALA LUMPUR

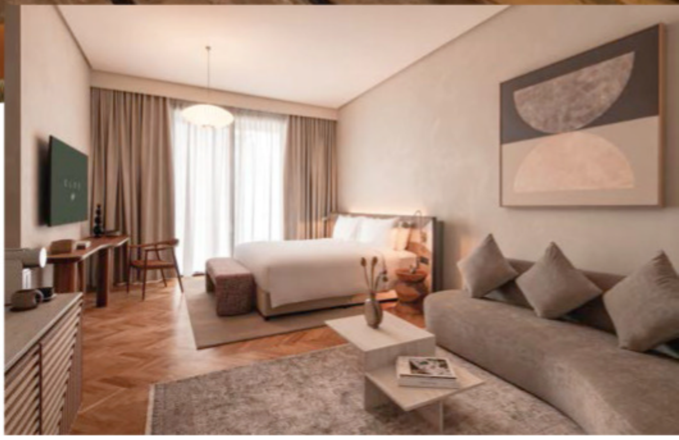
HOMETOWN HEROES

Justin Chen & Javier Perez

Kuala Lumpur never quite gets the credit it deserves.

"A lot of our guests never looked at KL as somewhere they'd escape to for a weekend. If you have three days off, you're going to think about Bangkok, Bali or Hong Kong," says Javier Perez, one-half of the brains behind Else Kuala Lumpur. Housed in the historic Lee Rubber Building, built in the 1930s by late rubber tycoon Lee Kong Chian, Else is a

IMAGE IMRAN SULAIMAN (ELSE KUALA LUMPUR FOUNDERS)



boutique hotel with ambitions to show off the city's vibrant and often overlooked creative scene—both to travellers visiting the city and to locals, as a way to "rediscover" their home turf.

"I'm excited about the fact that we are in this thriving neighbourhood that's attracting a lot of great young entrepreneurs," says Perez of the hotel's Chinatown locale. "People are converging. Stories are being told. That's a beautiful thing."

His business partner, Justin Chen, adds, "If you are looking to experience KL differently, this is the place to stay." Walking the walk, Chen and Perez made a point of making Else as Malaysian as possible: from tapping local design firm Studio Bikin to adorning the floors and walls with pieces by luxury rug designer Omar Khan. The hotel's design honours the building's heritage and history, with the right amount of contemporary cool to attract aesthetically conscious travellers.

For Chen and Perez, who are both based in Singapore, Else is their debut in hospitality. Chen is the deputy CEO of investment holding company Arcc Holdings, while Perez is a restaurateur.

"We weren't necessarily looking to do a hotel project, but we were given the opportunity to work on this icon of a building and it felt appropriate that it serves as a place that people could come back to as a landmark in [the] Chinatown precinct," Chen says. "What really drove us to develop Else is the sense that there is still a gap for an Asia-based hospitality brand."

BANYAN TREE GROUP

THE SOULFUL SCION

Ho Renyung

Ho Renyung, the second-generation leader of Banyan Tree Group, is taking the family business into the future with an acute sense of purpose, specifically in the areas of sustainability and humanity.

"Through the years, luxury has evolved to become more personalised," says Ho. "Customers today want experiences they have a personal connection with, and brands that drive emotional responses will be the ones that last through seasons and trends."

From supporting nature conservation to making internal efforts to educate and empower hotel staff—its empathy-centred programme promotes mindful practice in service culture—Ho is determined to make a long-lasting and meaningful impact on the environment both inside and outside Banyan Tree's properties.

"We realised it's a quality of empathy that endows a sense of sanctuary, no matter the location," says Ho. "Having empathy cultivates a space for diversity, adaptability and creating connections within the self and to others."

The hotel group has also been a leader in resort-based

IMAGE DAVID YEOW (ELSE)

conservationism, establishing an impressive network of research facilities, including the Banyan Tree Marine Lab in the Maldives. Closer to home, Banyan Tree's efforts have helped to protect natural habitats in Thailand and Indonesia—in June last year, the group opened Buahan, a Banyan Tree Escape, a collection of 16 private villas in Bali's Ubud region, overlooking the island's seven peaks and boldly pioneering a "no doors, no walls" concept.

"True luxury is feeling rejuvenated through the healing power of nature," says Ho, "or having a renewed sense of purpose after experiencing local culture."

In March this year at Buahan, Ho and her team launched Lentera Bumi—meaning "lantern of the Earth"—the first and only resort-based conservatory dedicated to restoring firefly populations in Bali. Fireflies play an essential role in nature's delicate food chain, and are an indicator of healthy natural ecosystems. But populations are dwindling across the globe, with some species becoming extinct due to habitat loss, pesticide use and pollution.

It's one of many ways Ho hopes to prove that sustainable practices in hotels aren't just an added cost for optics. Ho, who is a mentor for Unreasonable Group, which exists to repurpose capitalism for positive change, says, "Practising sustainable actions sustains business. It's a mindset of understanding the ecosystem of how something is created and the impact of one on another. When we know the consequences of our actions, we can think differently about how we consume."

From top: Ho Renyung of Banyan Tree Group; Buahan, which pioneered a no doors, no walls concept. **Opposite page:** Inside Else Kuala Lumpur, where modern touches adorn the heritage Lee Rubber Building

IMAGES **VCLUXE (HO); BPSO (BUAHAN)**

SUITE LIFE

The new Bulgari Hotel Tokyo brings Italian extravagance to the heart of Japan's buzzing capital and invites guests to take it all in—from more than 40 floors above the city

By Pameyla Cambe

The words "Bulgari Hotel" conjure images of glamour marked by Italian marble walls, black granite floors and high ceilings. Bulgari Hotel Tokyo, which opened this April, honours that lavish vision—with a Japanese twist.

It is the latest addition to the Bulgari Hotels & Resorts collection, through which Bulgari has left its Italian imprint across destinations such as Bali, Dubai and Paris. The luxury brand selects the setting of its hotels with a jeweller's precision, and so the first Bulgari Hotel in Japan impresses with its address alone: it crowns Tokyo Midtown Yaesu, a shiny new skyscraper that towers over the Yaesu district in Chuo City.

Silvio Ursini, group executive vice-president of Bulgari Hotels & Resorts, lists the hotel's nearby attractions with pride: "You have the Tokyo Imperial Palace, Nihonbashi, Otemachi, Marunouchi and Ginza. So you can actually walk for great shopping experiences, history and nature." Guests can also cross the street from the hotel to Tokyo Station and hop on a train or a bus—all in a matter of minutes. Not that Bulgari Hotel Tokyo makes it tempting to leave in the first place.

The hotel's ground-floor lobby itself is a spectacle, boasting a whole wall in gleaming green marble (from Italy, of course). It is a prelude to the dazzling display of good taste that awaits at the hotel's main lobby and lounge on the 40th floor: spaces that bear many signature touches of a Bulgari Hotel, such as the jeweller's signature eight-pointed star, and are outfitted with sleek furniture by Italian designer brands including Maxalto, B&B Italia and Flexform.

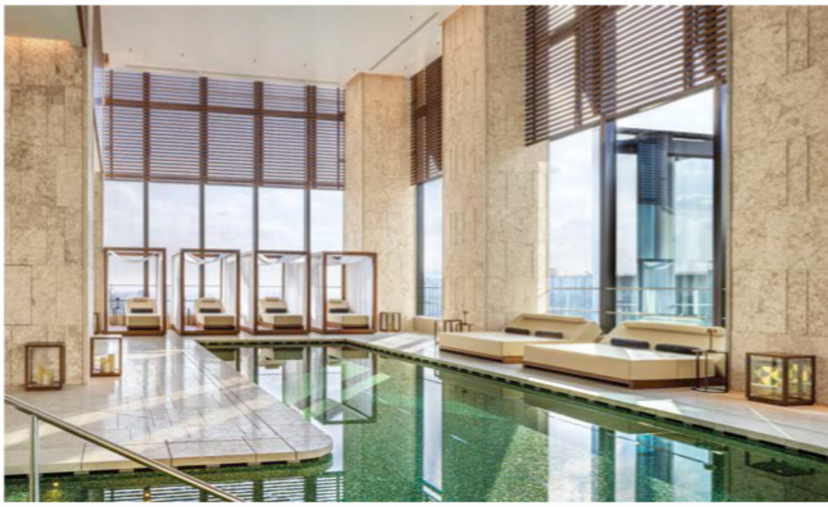
But there are also nods to Nippon. Panels of elm wood, typical of traditional Japanese homes, brighten the walls. Pointed arches, inspired by the bell-shaped *katomado* windows of Buddhist temples in Japan, frame the breathtaking Tokyo skyline that is visible all around the 40th floor.

"We can find a very strong connection in terms of aesthetics between Japanese and Italian design," says Patricia Viel, CEO and co-founder of architecture firm ACPV Architects Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel, which has designed every Bulgari hotel, including the Tokyo outpost. "The sense of luxury that we deliver relies on the quality of the atmosphere—the sounds, the feelings, the tactile experiences that you have. It's all very subtle. Everything is coordinated in harmony to give you a sense of being welcomed."

Viel says that visitors should feel that they "are at home, not in a hotel" when they check into any one of Bulgari Hotel Tokyo's 98 guest rooms and suites, including the Bulgari Suite on the 44th floor. It is easy to imagine anyone readily settling into the last, a 416-square-metre expanse that, fitted with its own bar, a gym, a private office, a dining room, and a vast living room with four stylish seating areas, is among the biggest hotel rooms in Tokyo. And this is even without the option of connecting it with the suites next door.

But if home is more humbly defined as an impeccably tasteful space that greets you with a showcase of Tokyo's bustling

IMAGES BULGARI



From top: The Bulgari Spa, featuring two pools, is an oasis of calm high above the bustling city; the Bulgari Bar opens into two outdoor terraces from which lucky guests may spot Mount Fuji. **Opposite page:** Each room in Bulgari Hotel Tokyo features a stunning view of the city skyline

cityscape from high in the sky, the deluxe room is more than adequate. It features an array of rich, warm shades such as saffron, which lends to the cosy atmosphere. "The colour palette of Bulgari Hotel Tokyo is different because there's an amount of natural light in this project that's not common," shares Viel. Tokyo's spring season, in particular, is especially generous with sunlight.

The room service menu, too, will make many guests feel at home with four themed breakfast sets: Italian, Japanese, American and Chinese. Meals are served with a side of friendly and flawless hospitality from the hotel staff, at any time of day.

On the 40th floor, Bulgari Hotel Tokyo's dining offerings tell a tale of two countries. You could go on a Roman holiday at Il Ristorante, helmed by chef Niko Romito, whose Reale restaurant in Abruzzo, Italy, has earned three Michelin stars. Patrons of Bulgari hotels will be familiar with Romito's deceptively simple, authentic Italian dishes. At the Tokyo outpost, the chef offers his take on potato gnocchi as well as *cremoso di mandorle,* an almond mousse.

For a taste of the East, make a booking at Sushi Hōseki on the same floor. The first sushi restaurant in a Bulgari hotel is helmed by Japanese sushi master Kenji Gyoten, whose restaurant Sushi Gyoten in Fukuoka was awarded three Michelin stars. Diners will be taken on an intimate omakase experience that is complemented by sake and rare Japanese whiskies. The view at Sushi Hōseki is different too: you can contemplate the Zen garden that sits outside the restaurant, illuminated by a lantern from Japan's Edo period.

Ursini believes that it is the little things that will make staying at Bulgari Hotel Tokyo an unforgettable experience for guests. "We bring to Tokyo something that's very distinctive, very Italian," he says. "My dream is to have people come up to the rooftop terrace and have gelato in summer."

That dream can be realised at the Bulgari Bar on the 45th floor, which greets guests with a glass mosaic masterpiece of a vibrant garden filled with birds and trees. Even more trees—real ones—can be found along the rooftop terraces that sit on both sides of the Bulgari Bar. It is out here that, on a clear day, you might spot Mount Fuji in the distance.

The mountain is a recurring symbol at the hotel, having inspired the first Bulgari creation made for a Japanese customer back in 1972. The tranquillity it inspires can be found in the Bulgari Spa, where guests are pampered with onsen baths, saunas and exclusive treatments designed by award-winning skincare brand Augustinus Bader. And let's not forget the swimming pools, which let guests float 40 floors above the city.

Bulgari Hotel Tokyo certainly is not short of luxuries. For Viel, the ultimate luxury is silence—something that may be rare in Tokyo but abundant in the hotel's soundproofed rooms, where guests fall asleep to the sight of the city lights that twinkle like stars.

Electric Vision

With its all-new pure battery electric vehicle, Lexus takes a step closer towards its goal of a sustainable global society *By Tom de Guerre*

A pioneer in luxury e-mobility ever since it unveiled the RX 400h in 2005, Lexus ushers in a new era with the launch of the RZ 450e, its first pure battery electric vehicle (BEV) for the global market.

Consider the new RZ an all-electric extension to Lexus's line-up—complete with the luxurious performance and craftsmanship motoring aficionados have come to love. By pairing its BEV-specific platform with a light, rigid body, Lexus is able to create a performance-oriented chassis with features such as a low centre of gravity for greater stability. This is, in turn, enhanced by various technologies such as the Direct4 all-wheel drive and Steer-by-Wire systems, as well as the marque's new e-Axle motor units.

Together, the suite of features help to create the Lexus Driving Signature—a uniquely Lexus driving experience defined by predictable, linear responses according to the driver's intentions—in an entirely new class of BEVs. Both AC and DC charging are available for the RZ; with fast charging, the car's battery can be charged from 10 per cent to 80 per cent in approximately 30 minutes for unparalleled convenience.

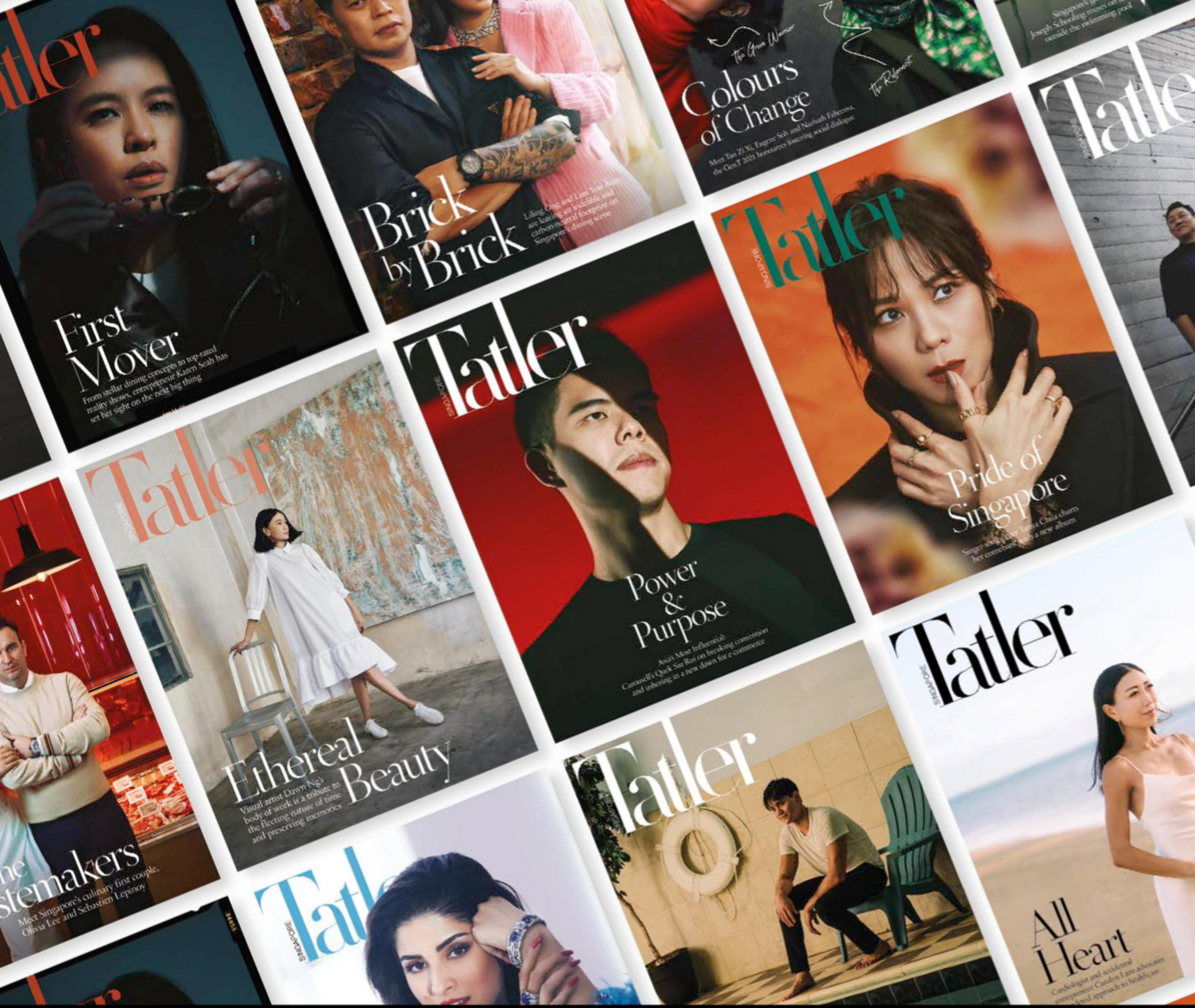
In terms of design, there is much to discover—and appreciate—in the new RZ. The brand's iconic spindle grille has evolved into the BEV Spindle Body, which expresses a sporty yet refined aesthetic. Note the new front bumper design, for instance, and how it emphasises aerodynamics and style in lieu of fulfilling the cooling and exhaust needs of an internal combustion engine. In the same way, a futuristic, sustainability-focused experience awaits the driver and passengers in the cabin. The minimalist space features the luxurious touches Lexus is known for, but accomplishes this with mindfully sourced materials. Meanwhile, driver-centric controls allow the driver to focus on the road yet retain full control over functions such as navigation and audio controls.

On the safety front, the new RZ is equipped with the latest Lexus Safety System+ 3.0 and a host of additional safety features. From the Pre-Collision System to the Lane Departure Alert and the Advanced Park, drivers can look forward to various safety and quality-of-life features that will make driving safer and more convenient.

To round out the package, new RZ owners can expect various perks that signal Lexus's commitment to a future focused on e-mobility. For a start, new RZ owners in Singapore can enjoy up to a year of free Shell Recharge credits: 3,300 kWh for non-landed property owners and 600 kWh for landed property owners. Each RZ also comes with an eight-year bumper-to-bumper warranty that includes the EV battery. This best-in-class warranty is complemented by a five-year "Lexus Electrification" package that has been specially customised for EV owners to cover essential replacements such as the brake pads, tyres and wipers.

The all-new Lexus RZ 450e represents a compelling vision for the future of e-mobility by melding luxurious design with a dynamic driving experience while maintaining superlative comfort and practicality. The only challenge will be deciding which colourway to get, what with the six single-tone and three dual-tone exterior colours available, plus an array of hue options for the interior.

IMAGE LEXUS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A panoramic view of Kota Kinabalu. **Below:** Weena Marcus wearing a traditional Rungus outfit

SABAH SECRETS

Proud Sabahan Weena Marcus takes us to her favourite spots around her hometown of Kota Kinabalu *By Elizabeth Soong*

The far eastern Malaysian state of Sabah, on the island of Borneo, is known as the Land Below the Wind due to its location south of the typhoon-prone region of the Philippines. Despite this appealing factoid, and its myriad attractions—iconic Mount Kinabalu, the nearby dive site of Sipadan and orangutan sanctuaries, to name the most popular—the region is often an afterthought for visitors to the country, even Malaysians themselves.

Tatler spoke to Weena Marcus, an influencer and businesswoman who served as Miss Malaysia Tourism 2009/2010, for a local guide to the capital city of Kota Kinabalu, or KK—an excellent introduction to the state. Marcus is an indigenous woman of mixed native heritage—her father is Rungus from the Matunggong district and her mother is Kadazan from Papar—and she uses her platform to celebrate her hometown and region.

IMAGE **CK NG/EYEEM/GETTY IMAGES (MOUNTAIN)**

What's the best way to greet a local?

"Kopivosian"—which means "hello" in the dialect of the Kadazan people, one of the largest indigenous groups in Sabah.

What do you love most about Sabah?

As an indigenous Rungus-Kadazan woman from Sabah, I am proud of my cultural heritage and the unique traditions and beliefs that come with it. Sabah is a beautiful state with diverse communities and natural resources, and I take pride in preserving and celebrating them. Our customs and values are an integral part of who we are as Sabahans. We are known for our hospitality and kindness, and it is a reflection of our diverse cultural heritage and strong community values.

What do you love most about your city?

Its stunning natural beauty. The city is surrounded by pristine beaches, lush rainforests and majestic mountains just a short drive away. Our food is also amazing, with a wide variety of delicious local dishes to try. There are so many places to explore and things to do in KK, from hiking Mount Kinabalu to diving to amazing local delicacies; it's a one-stop centre for tourists from all around the world.

But for me, it is Sabah's rich cultural heritage that makes KK truly unique. It is a melting pot of cultures, with a diverse mix of more than 30 different indigenous groups, each with their own unique culture and traditions. This diversity is reflected in the city's food, music, dance, art and architecture.

The people are some of the friendliest and most welcoming you will ever meet. They are always ready to greet you with a warm smile and a helping hand. Whether you're a local or a visitor, Sabahans will make you feel right at home.

What local delicacies must first-time visitors try, and where should they go?

- Tuaran mee. This is a must-eat

for first-time visitors because the noodles are locally handmade and can only be found in Sabah. Named after the district it originates from, Tuaran, they're a special handmade yellow egg noodles that use only egg yolks. Take a leisurely drive of approximately 30-45 minutes from town to Tuaran Mee Restaurant in Tuaran to get the original taste of it.

• Coconut pudding, *kelapa bakar* (grilled coconut) and *lokan panggang* (BBQ clams). A trip to Tuaran must include a pit-stop in Jalan Sulaman to try local delicacies from the roadside stalls. *Kelapa bakar* is a coconut grilled using firewood till the outer layer is burnt, and served hot. It tastes surprisingly different from fresh coconut. If you prefer something refreshing, coconut pudding is a must.

• Traditional Kadazan Dusun native food at My Native Sabah, Plaza 333. This restaurant serves food traditional to the Kadazan-Dusan people—and there's a buffet every weekend. Look out for some of the most popular foods: *bambangan, hinava, ambuyat* and, of course, protein-packed *butod*.

•Laksa Ngiu Chap at Yii Siang Hainan Ngiu Chap restaurant is one of my favourite places for beef noodles: it's consistently good and it's halal too. They have seafood options for those who don't eat beef. If you do, there's a choice of clear beef broth or laksa broth; I prefer the latter.

What is your favourite ...
Hotel? Shangri-La Tanjung Aru.
Seafood restaurant? Tung Fong Restaurant Inanam. I always order *kon lou* fish noodle with braised garoupa fish and Sabah veggies.
Fish noodle soup shop? Fatt Kee or Aliang Fish Head Noodle.
Teatime treat spot? Kedai Kopi 33, Lintas. This restaurant is famous for its polo bun with butter filling or char siu. It's my must-have every time I go back.
Bar? The recently opened On23 bar at Hyatt Centric. I love the ambience there and they have special cocktails

Clockwise, from far left: Marcus with friends in Kundasang, a hill station east of KK; sunset at Kampung Sangkir; the Alpaca Club; beef noodles at Yii Siang Hainan Ngiu Chap; Tuaran mee; Marcus on Mount Kinabalu; Cabana Retreat

infused with local rice wines such as *lihing* and *tapai*. Very interesting.

Where are the best places to go shopping?
Imago Shopping Mall, the biggest shopping mall in town. There's also Handicraft Market on Jalan Tun Fuad Stephens. This is where you can find all the local native handicrafts, from beaded accessories, pearl jewellery to sarongs. If you prefer a weekend market, head to Gaya Street on a Sunday.

Where is the one place to see and be seen?
The KK Waterfront and its rows of pubs and restaurants. It's a popular hangout spot for tourists as well as locals, the perfect spot to unwind and chill after a long day, where you can enjoy live music in the evenings while watching stunning sunse views.

Where is the best place to catch the sunset?
Sunset Bar at Shangri-La Tanjung Aru.

What's your favourite secret spot?
Kampung Sangkir, Kota Belud. I was on my way back from Pulau Mantanani with my friends and I remembered stumbling upon the most breathtaking sunset view. The spot overlooked a paddy field as well as a view of Mount Kinabalu. It was truly out of this world.

What surprising attraction have you only recently found?
There are more and more themed attractions popping up in the city which I have yet to visit, such as the Alpaca Club in Kundasang, and Cabana Retreat at Kudat, which offers stargazing experiences.

Fill in the blank. Sabah is . . .
Enchanting, heaven-on-earth, uniquely captivating.

THE LAST WORD

Every issue, *Tatler's* cover star answers a round of quick-fire questions to give a little more insight into their personality

By Hashirin Nurin Hashimi. Photography by Darren Gabriel Leow

Favourite place on earth?
I'm a huge Disney fan. I've been to all the parks around the world, except for Shanghai. When we lived in the US, I had an annual pass and would go often. I would sit out on Main Street to think about what I wanted to do. I've made life choices there.

Favourite place in Singapore?
As one can probably gather, I'm an amusement park fan. Universal Studios Singapore may be small but it's a chance to be transported into another imaginative world. Even when they no longer had the annual pass, I would still go with my son just to hang out.

Favourite food?
I love carrot cake and there's a place in Commonwealth that I go to pretty often. I also have a soft spot for those multi-layered rainbow kueh you peel off layer by layer.

Morning routine?
I'll put my kids on their school bus just before 7 am, and work out for two hours after that before going into the office. I'll typically do weights and some sprinting or running. I'll even take meetings mid-exercise sometimes, just to make sure I get a workout in.

Bucket list destination?
I definitely want to go to the Maldives. We were booked to go in 2018, but 10 days before the trip, my wife was diagnosed with brain tumour. We were going to bring the kids; at the time they couldn't swim but now they can. I'm very much an island or beach type of person.

Something new you did?
I'm so built into routine right now, but I recently started doing ice plunges. Some of its potential health benefits include improving focus and increasing attention span. The first time, I did two rounds of two minutes each in 6 C water. I've also been trying to work on my breathing, which really helps keep focus. Before I do anything specific, such as speaking in front of an audience, or before I do an interview, I'll do some box breathing, and it helps.

Someone you admire?
My wife, for sure. What happened to her was unspeakable. It's been almost five years. She has side effects, such as massive headaches, but she still carries on. She's smiling and energetic, even if she's in a lot of pain. She does yoga every day; and she's just present and always there for the kids—it's quite remarkable.

Life motto?
For me, it's to try to do good in any way you know.

Hennessy
PARADIS
PARADIS IS ON EARTH
WITH ALICIA KEYS & LANG LANG

WHAT MAKES
A ROLEX A ROLEX?

It's not the wheels and cogs. It's not the steel we shape nor the gold we forge. It's not the sum of every single part that we design, craft, polish and assemble with countless skills and constant care. It's the time it takes. The numerous days and months that are necessary until we can print this single word on each individual dial leaving our workshops: ***"Superlative."*** It's the mark of our autonomy, responsibility and integrity. This is all we make, but we make it all. So that, in time, you can make it your own.

#Perpetual

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